



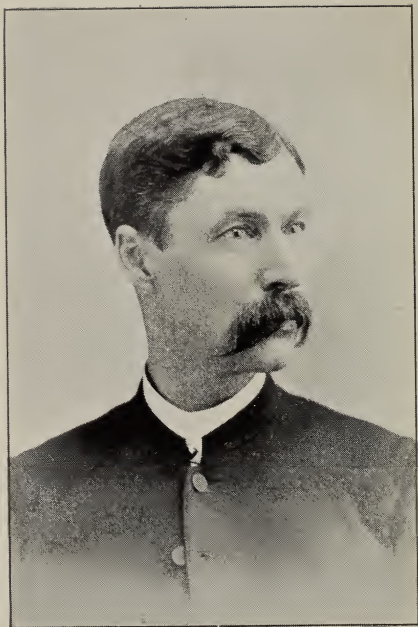
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MINING TOWN SERMONS



REV. O. E. OSTENSON

MINING TOWN SERMONS

Short Sermons Preached in the
Mining Towns of Colorado

BY THE
REV. O. E. OSTENSON

Sometime Archdeacon of
Western Colorado



MILWAUKEE
THE YOUNG CHURCHMAN CO.

1914

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PREFACE

These short sermons seem so direct and practical that it would be a loss not to have them published. They were, however, not intended for publication when they were prepared and preached; therefore, it will be appropriate to say of them, what Dr. Morgan Dix said in the preface to Dr. DeKoven's sermons:

"There are a few things which it would be well for men to do themselves, instead of leaving them to be done by others after they are gone. It is especially so with the publishing of sermons. They are generally written in haste and under pressure; they need revision; no one can do what ought to be done, if the writer does not."

We would call the attention of the reader to the fact that the following discourses are printed from unrevised manuscripts, and exactly as he left them.

Oconomowoc, Wis., 1914.

LEWIS OSTENSON.

THE ROCK

Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I
(Psalm lxi: 2).



THESE are most beautiful words, words which are sung by the Psalmist of old on occasions much like those many of us have experienced; words which have reverberated through the centuries in poetry and song, and touched the deepest and tenderest chords in the human heart; words which have been to thousands of the sons and daughters of earth more than bread to the hungry, and drink to the thirsty; more than rest to the weary, peace to the troubled, and balm to the bitter and aching voids. In considering this passage it cannot be supposed that I, or any man, can add anything to the transcendent beauty and pathos of its poetry, or add weight to impress it upon the human heart. The best that man can hope to do is to allow time for meditation upon its wondrous meaning, and upon the hold it has upon the human heart, and unveil, if possible, portions of its beauty. Man has sometimes been allowed to dive deep into the truths of

his being, and grasp what he is not, in the common walks of life, always permitted to see. So David, and all inspired men, have seized some great truth of our nature and penned it to the 'world. But the world does not always see. It takes some divine pressure upon the human soul to awaken it to the divine realities of life; some such influence as was brought to bear upon the spirit of the Psalmist when he was moved to touch the tender strains of that grand truth, or the approach of angelic hands to beckon us hence, will bring deep truths to light.

In contemplating this text, which must reëcho on many an occasion from every human soul, two things are plain: That there is something higher than we; and that the loftiest desire of the soul is to be led there. And for man to acknowledge this, is, to say the least, advancement. Though man be the crowning work of the world, yet there is a rock higher than he, and that is the everlasting Rock of Ages. "Who is a rock, save our God?" says the Psalmist. "Thou art my rock and my fortress." "He only is my rock; the rock of my strength."

The simple language of the text is like that of a little child, and because child-like, expresses the spirit of the Gospel. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye can not enter into

the kingdom of heaven." A child is taken by the hand and led. If a man should express that wish, there is hope that he sees farther into the future than men ordinarily do. One of the greatest scientists gave utterance to a universal truth in language like this: "I am but a child picking up pebbles of truth on the shore of eternity." Oh, if we could have all the culture and learning of the nineteenth century, the courage of a Spartan, the power of a Cæsar, the sword of a Charlemagne, and the riches of a Rothschild, then there might be hopes of our having and knowing so much that we could see its littleness, and learn again the humility of a little child. With all that wealth and power and science can give, that childlike echo of the soul would be to us at times precious beyond compare. David must have had some such experience as this; he rose so high in power, and honor, and riches, and royalty, that there was none higher than he. Yet, at that very time he learned the sublime yet simple truth that there was a Rock higher. Then it was, at the zenith of his power, standing on the summit of his earthly glory, that he gave to the world in immortal verse that immortal prayer, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I."

Yet it is not necessary to rise to the pinnacle of earthly fame in order to behold its beauty;

that is not the direct road to the everlasting Rock. Nay, it rises directly out of the waters of affliction, and out of the vale of tears.

Think not that you will never need to breathe this prayer, this divine aspiration. The time will come, and it is not far distant now, when we shall stand on the river's brink, ready to cross, or not ready. If we grasp the deep truths of the world, we shall behold that Rock, and desire the proffered guidance now. But do you know that we may in a measure reach that Rock in this world, so that the waters of affliction may but help to wash us clean, that we may rise with Christ, who, when His enemies scourged Him and nailed Him to the tree, was in a measure afar off in the presence of His Father? "It was as if men flung water at the stars and tried to put them out, and the stars shone on, calmly and safely, and took no notice of their persecutors, except to give them light."

In our sojourn here nothing seems to bind us more closely together than absence, even death. Alas, that a bond of union should cost so much; but such is the economy of heaven. The union of our country was bought by the blood of its patriots. Soldiers died in war that we might live in peace. Political harmony was brought out of political confusion and hatred by the sacrifice of blood. Christ died that we might live. He said, "It is finished."

We are ever taking leave of something that will not come back again. We let go, with a pang, portion after portion of our existence. However dreary we may have felt life to be here, yet when that hour comes—the winding up of all things, the last grand rush of darkness on our spirits, the hour of that awful sudden wrench from all we have ever known or loved, the long farewell to sun, moon, stars, and light—brother man, I ask you this day, and I ask myself, What will then be finished? When it is finished, what will it be? Will it be the butterfly existence of pleasure? The mere life of science? A life of sin and self-gratification? Or will it be: “Father, I have finished the work which Thou gavest me to do”?

It sometimes pleases the Almighty and Inscrutable Providence to send us adversity. “Ye now have sorrow,” said Christ, “but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy no man taketh from you.” Yes, when God’s children pass under the shadow of the Cross of Calvary, they know that, through that shadow, lies their passage to the great White Throne. For them Gethsemane is as Paradise. God fills it with sacred presences; its solemn silence is broken by the music of tender promises; its awful darkness softened and brightened by the sunlight of heavenly faces and the music of angelic wings.

Before I close, let me urge upon you the practical significance of the text. Many an occasion reminds us that we have not forever in which to act. This "life is but an isthmus between two vast eternities." It can not be that the text is meant only for a sentiment or creed. If so, its flowery poetry will fade and die, and it will lose its hold upon the human heart. It was not so meant by him who was once a shepherd boy. If all those to whom these words were once a comfort could speak to us now, that would not be the meaning. But, to make these words of living and enduring beauty, we must bow to the divine will here, and not only acknowledge that everlasting Rock, but arise and lead on to it now. And when all else fails, that will be the Rock that standeth sure.

THE UNKNOWN GOD

Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and said, Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. Or, what is a better translation, I perceive that in all things ye are very religious. Or, as the revised version has it, somewhat religious (Acts xvii: 22).



IT must have been a tremendous task to introduce Christianity into Athens in a speech in the days of Paul, where science and art and philosophy had grown up for centuries, and were moulded into all that had been sacred to their memories; a religion which had taken such hold as to be interwoven in their fine arts, sculpture, painting, and poetry; a religion which was born and bred in them. To replace such a religion with the religion of Christ, must have seemed as hazardous to the life of its advocates as the new philosophy of Socrates proved to him some hundreds of years before, within the same city walls. It was heterodoxy to introduce a strange religion—even the

Christian religion. Paul was alone on Mars Hill, as far as Christians were concerned. There was nothing at hand, nothing in sight but what seemed to speak of heathenism.

But St. Paul had some advantages, and he was not slow to improve them. One was the weakness of the religion of his audience. Here is where St. Paul made the first stroke of his rhetoric. The Athenians were not fully satisfied that they had all there was of religion. They had many gods; but the very fact of their multitude suggested the idea that there might be still more. Therefore, just as we have All Saints' Day, so as to be sure that we celebrate the memory of them all, just so did the Athenians make a wise provision for remembering all the gods by raising an altar to one unknown, if perchance there should be one. It was a sort of All Saints' Day for the Greeks. It was at this point that St. Paul made the first point in his masterful oratory. He had a God to tell them of, that was worthy of that altar. St. Paul had another advantage. He was a new man, and was telling them something new. And that was just what they desired; "For all the Athenians, and the strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else but either to tell or to hear some new thing."

Still another advantage. The Athenians were

all religious, very religious, says St. Paul. So he did not have to make them religious, or put religion into them, nor did they have to *get religion*. All that St. Paul had to do was to guide that religion in the right direction which had already developed. Here is another advantage—and St. Paul did not leave one of them unimproved—after telling them they were religious he did not have to say that their religion was all wrong. He did not have to tell them that they must give up all the religion they had, and adopt his, the true religion, but he said, Go on with your worship, and I will assist you in it.

There are only two thoughts which I wish to bring from Mars Hill this morning; and I wish to bring them home with all the force they can bear. They will be of priceless value in assisting to mould the thought of this century. I will state my thought in two categorical propositions: First, every man is a religious being. Second, all religion is good, if properly directed. Now if these propositions be true, which I shall endeavor to show, they are of inestimable worth. If they are not true, then much of the religious teaching is not true. Now we make a great mistake when we say of anyone, He is not religious, because everybody is religious. In our overwhelming zeal for the advancement of Christianity, we often make the

most fatal mistakes; mistakes which tell *against* us more, sometimes, than our zeal and labor tell *for* us. Now I believe that every man is religious by nature. I believe he is born a religious being, just as much as he is born a rational being. And it would be just as true to say of one man, He has no reason, as to say of another, He has no religion. A man may say he has no religion; but we do not go by what is said, but by what is more in accordance with the truth. To say that a man gets religion, is not correct; because everybody has it. I have never heard of a nation on this earth which is not a religious nation—never! I have yet to hear of the man in this world who has no religion.

In lands the most remote, and in tribes the most barbarous and low, is found the spark of religion, which often lives and burns to cheer when other powers are left to inevitable obscurity and decay. We cannot find a man in this civilized land who is not religious. I have not been able to find one in the mining camps, hid away in the Rocky mountains. Dr. Livingstone, in all his travels in the wilds of Africa, never found such a man. We cannot, in all the histories of the world, find the record of such a man. When St. Paul arrived in Athens he found an altar erected to an unknown God, and that was the nearest he could find to Christianity. Yet he told those

Athenians that they were somewhat religious, even very religious. Now we should bear in mind that, wherever we go, in Christian or heathen lands, we shall find the people religious, so that we can say with St. Paul, I perceive that ye are somewhat religious. Some of our best Christian people completely ruin the best argument for Christianity here by not observing this truth; by saying, You must get religion, when everybody has it; when it is a universal power; and all that Christianity has to do with it is to develop it, and to guide it to its highest aims and possibilities.

Religion is as universal as reason and the human race. It is a universal power which must assert itself, either through Christianity or some form of heathenism. You may say you will have Christianity or no Christianity; then the question will be between Christianity and some other outward manifestation of religion. But you cannot say that you will not have religion; you may as well say that you will blot out reason, imagination, and memory, from the face of the earth. Now there is a stronger foundation for Christianity, and a greater reason for its existence, than is often dreamed of. Religion is universal, and Christianity is its highest guide. There is no question about religion. We are religious, and we can't help ourselves. There is only this ques-

tion about Christianity: Christianity or some form of heathenism; which will you have?

Now I conceive this to be the truth: all religion is good, provided it be properly directed and guided. And this I believe will aid us to arrive at a deep truth much overlooked at the present day. How do you suppose our missionaries proceed in foreign lands, and in our missionary fields on the frontier—or at home, for that matter? What do they do but say, You are wrong; you must give up your religion and belief, and come to ours, which is the true faith and the only way to salvation? Now I desire to place before you the example of two of the greatest missionaries the world has ever beheld: St. Paul and St. Ansgarius. And what did they do? St. Paul goes to Athens, and finds there the heathen religion in full development. What did he tell them? Did he say, Your religion is all wrong and my religion is all right? No; that is what we would have said had we been there. Did he say, You cannot be saved unless you give up your heathen practices, and embrace our faith? No, that is what we would have said. St. Paul said, You have built an altar here to the unknown God. Now you do not know Him; let me tell you all about Him.

Here you see Christianity in its true position guiding and directing religion.

Early in the centuries, when northern Europe became Christianized, there was one missionary more powerful than all the rest because he evidently believed and worked on the principle that Christianity was to be the guide of all religions. St. Ansgarius was a pioneer; he advanced where others of his comrades had not gone before. It was in the dead of winter when he found the natives of the North engaged in some great heathen festival. This was all wrong; this was superstition, they must give up these heathen practices and adopt our religion, the true Christian religion, to be saved. That is what we would have said had we been there. Not so with St. Ansgarius. He was too much of a St. Paul. It seemed they kept up the festival day after day. St. Ansgarius learned the name of the festival. They called it "Yule." Had we been there we should have repudiated that heathen name. But, says St. Ansgarius, the name is all right—call it "Yule!" The time of the year is all right, only place it a few days earlier so as to make it fall on the twenty-fifth of December. The festival in itself is all right, only let the object of it be Christ. And they did so, keeping up their annual festivities. Like St. Paul, he corrected the object of worship. And Yule is to-day the old English name for Christmas. This, then, is the lesson which we learn from the great

Apostles, that there is a universal truth in all religion; that heathen religions are to be corrected and guided, rather than overturned; that we all ought to have as much forbearance and charity for one another as St. Paul had for the Athenians, and Ansgarius had for the people of the North; that, rather than deny the truth of our neighbor's religion, we should endeavor to find the truth that lies somewhere within his view with this assurance: that he must be somewhat religious, and he may have an altar to the God unknown.

KNOCKING

Behold, I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear My voice, and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with Me (Rev. iii: 20).



OUR Blessed Lord, in His Sermon on the Mount, says: "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

Now, this is exactly what we might expect of a gracious God, and especially of an all-merciful Saviour. But who would ever imagine that this process should be inverted, and that, besides a sinner knocking at the door of the kingdom of heaven in fervent supplication, the Son of God Himself should come and knock at the door of the sinner's heart, soliciting admittance there? Yet this is the representation given us in the text.

This figure of Christ standing at the door and knocking is one of the most impressive in the Bible. All the figures and pictures in the Bible were drawn from the fields of nature, and from

the incidents of human life, and so was this "knocking at the door." When this book of Revelation was written, men used to knock at the door for admission. They undoubtedly had in mind a man knocking at his friend's door with good news, with riches and happiness, or a loving father seeking an erring child. Such an incident I read of in a church paper took place in Philadelphia not many years ago. It is a repetition of the old story, but it shows us so vividly how Jesus seeks His erring children. At a house in Philadelphia a young woman would appear at one of the windows, and sit for hours with the blinds half closed. She seemed lonely and unhappy. It appeared as if she were a sort of prisoner there, and would be glad to get away. One day, while she was occupying her usual seat in all her loneliness, a carriage drove to the door. An old man with silvery locks stepped out and knocked. She looked down upon him and trembled and turned pale, but she did not move. The blinds were turned so that the man at the door could not see her, and, thinking that he was not heard, he continued to knock until he aroused the neighbors, and they began to look out to see what was the matter. Yet that beautiful woman in the parlor-chamber sat rigid as a statue. The knocking seemed to trouble her, but she would not respond. The old man re-

entered his carriage and drove away. After a while the same carriage stopped at that door; the same old man ascended the steps and knocked; the same beautiful, but sad, pale face, appeared behind the lattice. She listened as before, and watched every movement, but did not open the door, or send a servant to open it. Later in the day he came a third time, but with no better success. He seemed to suspect that he was refused admission because the lady did not wish to see him, for, as he turned away, he cried loud enough to be heard, across the street: "Oh, Emily, my daughter, my poor, dear daughter!" Yet Emily moved not, but sat in the same place as if spell-bound, long after the carriage had driven away.

Now that old man had come a long journey to find his erring child. By patient inquiry he had learned where she was. He waited till her betrayer had gone out, and she was alone. Then he went, hoping to persuade her to return home. But pride and worldly pleasure were stronger than filial love. She knew that only one motive could have brought her venerable father there. She knew that she ought to be grateful to him, and return home an obedient daughter; but she would not even speak to him. She sat and watched him knocking, knocking, without a movement of relenting. She heard the final cry that came as

from a broken heart. Yet she let him go away, without a word or look of recognition.

How like her in her gilded misery, in her cruelty and folly are all who reject the Saviour! He comes with claims upon them holier than those of any human parent. He comes with a love deeper and purer than that of any human heart. He comes, not only to save them from sin and sorrow, but to enrich them with immortal blessedness and glory. And yet they listen to His knocking as that woman did. They do not want Him to come in. If He does, the idols enshrined there will have to be expelled, and the heart made the temple of the Holy Ghost. Such is the patient, persistent love of the Saviour. He sends His servants to call men to repentance. He pleads with them from the cross, and pleads for them in the midst of the throne. But this does not satisfy the love and longing of His heart. He comes to each individual sinner. He comes again and again. And yet how few respond to the lowly wooing of His love! Some will say, perhaps, "He never really came and knocked at the door of my heart!" But do you not remember times when a sudden solemnity overshadowed your spirit in the midst of gaiety and folly? Do you not remember when some verse, or sacred song, or sermon,

thrilled you? Have you never been wakened by terror, or softened by affliction? In all these cases, and in others like them, Christ was knocking. The hand, scarred by the nails on Calvary, was trying to make you hear and heed. There He stood beside you in your business hours, by the fireside, in the sanctuary, in the cemetery, saying, "I am here to save you." But you did not listen to His voice; you hastened to drown it in the din of the world.

But Christians who ought to know the Saviour's voice often keep Him standing at the door. They hear a knock, but do not realize that it is His. They are like a certain poor widow. Her minister heard that she was in great trouble because she could not pay her rent. The landlord threatened to throw her and all she had into the street. The minister collected from some friends the amount due, and went to the widow's house, thinking how happy his visit would make her. He knocked; no one came to the door; he knocked again, all was still. He tried the door; it was fastened. He concluded that his parishioner was not at home, and went away. Meeting her the next day he told her of his unsuccessful visit. "Oh, dear me," she replied, "was it you that knocked so long? I was in the house all the time,

but I thought it was the landlord, so I kept as still as a mouse."

When Christ comes to the door of the heart, His knock may be sickness, bereavement, or some disappointment in business. He sends trials to wean us from other objects of trust and love, and lead us to seek our real joy in Him. We shall never know in this world how often Christ has stood at the door and knocked. Every providence that tends to remind us of human frailty, or of the insufficiency of worldly good, is a fresh invitation from Him to open the door, that we may be filled with His joy and peace. How sad it is that we do not understand God's way for making us happy! But we shut ourselves up as if an enemy were trying to come in, as if pain and sorrow were His summons who is waiting to make us happier in the night of affliction than we were in the brightest day of prosperity.

You all know something of this knocking at the door. Be not satisfied with the intercourse that you have yet had with your Lord and Saviour. Remember, it matters not how unworthy any man may be; if he had all the sins of Manasseh himself upon his soul, the mercy here offered should be imparted to him. We are told of Manasseh that he filled Jerusalem with the blood of innocents, and made the people worse than the heathen

whom the Lord had destroyed before them. Yet when he humbled himself, God heard his supplication, and made Himself known to him under the endearing character of Israel's God. We may therefore expect from the Saviour such an abundance of grace and mercy and peace as shall be a foretaste of heaven itself, provided we only humble ourselves, and open the door and let Him in. Then our feast with the Saviour here will be only a prelude to that richer feast above, the marriage supper of the Lamb, to be enjoyed for evermore.

NO ROOM

There was no room for them in the inn (St. Luke ii: 7).



ANCIENT prophets were prophesying of the coming of the Messiah. The world was expecting it. Certain events should be the signs of His coming, and certain circumstances the auspicious time. Though Judea was now nominally a kingdom under Herod, yet Herod was a vassal of Augustus; and Herod's subjects took an oath of allegiance to Augustus, perhaps when this registration was made, for which Joseph and Mary took the far journey from Galilee to Bethlehem. This registration was ordered by the Roman Emperor. War with Eastern Empires had ended in universal peace. Rome was now the world, and it could well say that all the world should be taxed. The time was come for the Messiah's birth because it could be said that the world was now subject to the Roman, or Fourth Monarchy, according to the prophecy of Daniel (Dan. ii: 44).

The time was very seasonable for the coming of the Prince of Peace, now that Augustus ruled

the world. The sceptre was now departed from Judah, for this was the first registration under Rome, and we are told in Gen. xlix: 10, that the sceptre should not depart from Judah until Shiloh come. Rome, the world, was now performing the will of God, and fulfilling prophecy in bringing Mary to Bethlehem, which goes to prove her divine Son to be the Christ. "But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah," says the prophet Micah, "though thou be little among the thousands of Judah, yet out of thee shall He come forth unto Me that is to be ruler in Israel; whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."

According to prophetic language, the Saviour was to be born in Bethlehem. One mile from that village is a little plain in which now stands a rude chapel, built over the traditional spot where there were shepherds keeping watch over their flocks by night, when lo, the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and to their happy ears were uttered the good tidings of great joy, that unto them was born that day in the city of David a Saviour, which was Christ the Lord.

The associations of our Lord's nativity were all of the humblest character, and the very scenery of His birth-place was connected with memories of poverty and toil; a circumstance which should

make the humblest dweller upon this earth take heart, and endeavor to rise by the power of Him whose early life upon this earth we now commemorate.

In obedience to the commands of Caesar Augustus at Rome, Joseph and Mary leave their humble home in Nazareth on a journey of seventy miles or more, to the city of their fathers. Though fallen as was their temporal fortune, they were of David's royal race, and the village of Bethlehem was once the home of their great ancestor while, as a shepherd boy, he was watching his flocks upon the surrounding hills.

It is difficult for us in this distant age, and this far land, to form a correct idea of the customs of those times. The inn of the village was probably then, as in modern Palestine, a low structure, consisting of a square enclosure, in which the cattle could be fastened for the night, and a raised floor or pavement, or a series of them, where travelers might spread their mats, recline at meals, and find a resting place at night. Devoid of comfort as such arrangements were, they were eagerly sought, and on great public occasions all could not be accommodated. Other travelers had easily passed the poor peasants on the way, and when, after toiling up the steep hillside, they reached the inn, they found every part of it already full.

“There was no room for them in the inn.” So the next best place for them was the stable, instead of the open and adjoining inn.

We can picture for ourselves the gatekeeper of Bethlehem shaking his head when Joseph and Mary passed in on that memorable evening, as if to say, “No room for such as you; the rich and great have gone in before you, and you must find shelter where you can.”

Whoever those persons may have been who turned so coldly and selfishly away from Joseph and Mary on that memorable December night, although they could not help seeing that they were cold, hungry and weary, yet we must say this for them: that they did not know what privileges, and blessings, and happiness, they lost by thus coldly treating, and thus unmercifully neglecting, the Son of the Highest when He came in the greatest humility to visit this distant world.

Now that these events are made facts of history, we readily see them in their true light; and many well-disposed Christians have said, “Had we been dwellers in Bethlehem on that first Christmas Eve, Joseph and Mary should have shared with us in all we could offer; our roof should have covered them, they should have been fed from our table, and warmed from our hearth.”

We may be perfectly sincere in supposing that

we should have been very kind and hospitable to this humble family from Galilee, but, before we settle it in our minds that we should assuredly have done so, it will be quite as well to test ourselves in a plain matter-of-fact way.

There is such a thing, even now, as having no room for Christ, and treating Him with as much indifference and contempt as if the door of a comfortable inn had been rudely closed against Him, and obliged Him to take refuge in a stable. Here is one devoted to Christ by the solemn vows of baptism and confirmation, who has no time to breathe a prayer publicly or privately, or attend to the wants of his immortal soul. He may not always be neglectful of his duties; but he lets them go by with the coldest indifference if he happens to be in unusual haste to get to his place of business, or if he reaches home weary at night. He can find time, and make time, for almost all things else; but, unless perfectly convenient to himself, he has no room for his Saviour.

This is the man who does not come to the House of God, and who does not obey the voice of Him who said, "Do this in remembrance of Me," just because his business is such; and, worse than all, may not encourage his family to follow the example of Christ and His apostles in the breaking of bread and of prayer. And then again, the

wife may not do what she can in giving encouragement in Christ's work. Can there be room for Jesus in that house? Would they not have turned away from Joseph and Mary, had they come toil-worn and fainting to their door? Aye, it would have caused them little concern had this refusal of hospitality to the poor strangers left the Holy child Jesus to be cradled in a manger. Again, in support of His Church (in money matters), how many Christians are acting the part of the thoughtless people of Bethlehem, when the inn was closed against those who so greatly needed its shelter? And how many, when the Lord Jesus comes to them in the person of His ministers, and claims a share for the work of His Kingdom, leave His servants to make brick when no straw is provided?

Multitudes of young persons who were consecrated to God in infancy, who may or may not have renewed their Baptismal vows in Confirmation, have no room for Jesus in their hearts, neglecting to obey His dying request to partake of the Holy Communion, and who are living as unmindful of their obligations and privileges as if He had no claim upon them, and they were expecting no favors at His hands.

Is Jesus, who brought so much happiness into the world, such an intruder upon our joys, and is the thought of Him such a damper upon the

mind of youth, that, in the happy hours of early life no room should be found for Him? Ah! beloved, whether you be young or old, how shall you face Him in heaven for whom you found no room on earth? No room for Christ Jesus the only Saviour! In a moment, when you least expect it, it may be, the door of eternity will swing open, and unseen messengers of the Most High will lead you in. One of two receptions awaits you: one of glory, or one of darkness. It may be some very small neglect (as you account such things) will settle your future lot.

Oh, if we could only see what Jesus requires of us, and how it would ensure our future well-being for time and for eternity! And the room that we could give up to Jesus, here and now, would be of more value to us than the same room filled with gold and silver.

“O Jesus, Thou art pleading
In accents meek and low,
‘I died for you, My children,
And will ye treat Me so?’

“O Lord with shame and sorrow
We open now the door;
Dear Saviour, enter, enter,
And leave us nevermore!”

SHALL SEE THE KING

Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off (Isaiah xxxiii: 17).



YEAR after year, as it passes, brings us the same warnings again and again, and none perhaps more impressive than those with which it comes to us at this season. The very chill and cold which now come foretell the last dreary days of the world. The year is worn out; spring, summer, and autumn have in turn brought their gifts and done their utmost; but they are over, and the end is come. All is past and gone; all has failed. We are tired of the past; we would not have the seasons longer; and the austere weather which succeeds, though ungrateful to the body, perhaps, is in tone with our feelings, and is acceptable. Such is the frame of mind which befits the closing of the Christian year; and such is the frame of mind which comes alike to good and bad at the end of life. The days have come in which they have no pleasure, yet they would hardly be young again,

even could they be so by wishing it. Life is well enough in its way, but it does not fully satisfy. Thus the soul is cast forward upon the future, and, in proportion as its conscience is clear, and its perception keen and true, does it rejoice solemnly that "the night is far spent, the day is at hand," that there are "new heavens and a new earth" to come, that we "shall," after this life has ended, "see the king in His beauty," and "behold the land that is very far off." These are feelings for holy men in winter and in age, waiting, in some dejection perhaps, but with comfort on the whole, and calmly, though earnestly, for the advent of Christ.

And such too are the feelings with which we now come before Him in prayer. The season is chill and cold, and the worshippers are few; but all this befits those who are by profession penitents and mourners, watchers and pilgrims; more dear to them the loneliness, more cheerful the severity and more bright the gloom, than all the pleasures and luxuries of earth. True faith does not covet earthly comforts; it only complains when it is forbidden to kneel. Its only hardship is to be hindered, or to be ridiculed, when it would place itself as a sinner before its Judge. One year goes and then another, but the same warnings

recur. The frost or the snow comes again, the earth is stripped of its brightness, and then amid the unprofitableness of earth and sky, the well-known words return, bidding us to prepare to meet our God. Oh, blessed they who obey these warning voices and look out for Him whom they love, but have not seen. At present we are in a world of shadows. What we see is not substantial. Suddenly this world will be rent in twain and vanish away, at any rate, as far as we are concerned, and our Maker will appear. He will look on us while we look on Him. "When the Son of man shall come in His glory, and all the holy angels with Him, then shall He sit upon the throne of His glory; and before Him shall be gathered all nations; and He shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats" (St. Matt. xxvi: 31-32).

Such is our first meeting with our God, and it will be as unexpected as it is intimate. "Yourselves know perfectly," says St. Paul, "that the day of the Lord so cometh as a thief in the night. For when they shall say peace and safety, then sudden destruction cometh upon them." This is said of the wicked. Elsewhere He is said to surprise the good as well as the bad. While the Bridegroom tarried, the wise and foolish virgins "all slumbered and slept. And at midnight there

was a cry made, Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet Him."

But is this all that we are told, all that is allowed us or done for us? Do we know only this, that all is dark now, and all will be light then? That now God is hidden, and one day will be revealed? That we are in a world of sense, and are to be in a world of spirits? For surely it is plain wisdom to prepare for this great change, and if so, are any directions, hints or rules, given us how we are to prepare? "Prepare to meet thy God." "Go ye out to meet Him," is the dictate of natural reason as well as of inspiration. But how is that to be?

May there not be a gradual preparation of the soul for His presence, just as the bodily eye must be exercised to bear the full light of day? At any rate, Scripture tells us that the Gospel covenant is intended to prepare us for this future, glorious and wonderful destiny, the sight of God, a destiny which, if not most glorious, will be most terrible. And in the worship and service of Almighty God which Christ and His apostles have left to us, we have means of approaching God, and gradually learning to bear the sight, that beatific vision.

This is indeed the most momentous reason for religious worship. We are one day to change our being. We are not to be here forever. Direct

intercourse with God, in prayer and sacramental communion, may be necessary in some incomprehensible way to prepare our very nature to bear the sight of God.

Let us take this view of religious service: it is "going out to meet the Bridegroom," who, if not seen in His beauty, will appear in consuming fire. Besides other momentous reasons, it is a preparation for an awful event which shall one day be. What it would be to meet Christ at once without preparation, we may learn from what happened to the apostles when His glory was suddenly manifested to them. St. Peter said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." And St. John, when he saw Him, "fell at His feet as dead."

Such, then, is the spirit in which we should come to His ordinances and sacraments, considering them as first-fruits of that sight of Him which one day must be. When we kneel down in prayer let us think to ourselves, Thus shall I one day kneel down before His very footstool, though spiritual, and He will be seated over against me. I come with the thought of that awful hour before me. I come to confess my sin to Him now, that He may pardon it then. And I say, O Lord, Holy, and Immortal in heaven, in the hour of death, and in the day of judgment, Good Lord, deliver us.

THE PILLAR AND GROUND OF THE TRUTH

The Church . . . the pillar and ground of the truth (I. Tim. iii:15).



THE Mormons talk about the Everlasting Gospel. They say this Gospel was withdrawn from the world by the Almighty very soon after the Apostolic days, because of the wickedness of the world, and then it was restored again to Joseph Smith in the last century. I said, that was absurd. How would you withdraw good news after you had once sent it out, and it had been received by the people? I did not see how it could be done. I said, the only way I could see was to deny the truth of that news, and say that it was not so. How are you otherwise going to withdraw the Gospel or any other good news from the people? If such a thing were true, it would not be an everlasting Gospel. Now, I said, if you want to hear the everlasting Gospel, come here. It was never taken away from us. We have had it all the time.

Then I said: You say that the Everlasting Gospel was restored to Joseph Smith less than seventy-five years ago, and restored by our Lord Jesus Christ. I said, it was no such thing. You did not get the Gospel from our Lord Jesus Christ seventy-five years ago. You got it from us. You got it from this Church. You show me the Gospel that you read to your people, and I dare say it is the very identical Gospel that we have always had for nineteen hundred years. Did you not take the Book, the Gospel, and the Bible, bodily from this Church? I went to them and asked them: Is it not King James' version that you use? And they said, Yes. I was going to take the Bible that they used in their state houses, and show them the Preface and prove that it was our version, our translation, our compilation. And they acknowledged that it was. Then said I, *we* restored the Gospel to you, or rather, you got the Gospel from *us*, the same Gospel that we always had. It may have been taken away from you, but it never was taken away from us.

If it had not been for this great Church of ours, there would have been no Mormon Church, because they could not have gotten the Gospel. They could have taken the Roman Bible, or the Greek Bible, or the ancient manuscripts; but then

they could not have translated them. This Church of ours is the only Church that has so translated the Bible that modern civilization will accept it. So the Mormon Church takes it, and tells her people that they got it from heaven; even when the fly-leaf tells them that they got it from this Church. That their own people cannot or do not see this, is one of the marvels.

If it were not for this great Church of ours, there would be no Congregational church. If it were not for this great Church of ours, there would be no Campbellite church; no Baptist church; no Unitarian church. Perhaps you think that this Church to which we belong is only one of the denominations. Perhaps you think it is only one of the numerous or unnumbered sects. Perhaps you think it makes no difference to which Church you belong. Perhaps you think one church is just as good as another—of all these you see and hear about. If all the churches come here to get the Bible and to get the Gospel restored to them, why, there must be *something* to this Church. There must be something to this Church that you did not reckon on; something that you did not take into account when you were thinking about the churches around you. If it were not for this Church of ours, there would be no Methodist church; no Universalist; no Seventh Day Ad-

ventist church. If it were not for this Church there would be no Alexander Dowie church; no Wesleyan church, nor any other modern church; neither could any be started. How could there be? They would not have any Bible if it were not for this Church. They would be left high and dry without any foundation. They would not have anything to start on. They surely would not go to the Roman Catholic Church for their Bible, or for anything else. And they could not translate the original manuscripts with any satisfaction to the people, or even to themselves. None of them ever translated the Bible. If they did, they could not sell it. They would not have it themselves. The Baptists were not quite satisfied with our Bible, so they made a translation themselves, but nobody wanted it. They did not want it very long themselves; so they came back to the Bible of this Church. The lodges and secret societies ought to appreciate where they got the Bible.

Of all the churches in the world, therefore, this Church of ours stands solitary and alone as the only Church which has produced the word of God in such a form, such a scholarly form, such a fair, unbiased and unprejudiced form, as to make it generally and universally acceptable to the high-

est modern civilization, and to the whitest and greatest race.

The Roman Church is a Church not governed by the greatest and whitest race. That is the trouble with that Church. The Bible of this Church is about the only Bible that the people generally know anything about. And it is so universally acceptable that, whenever any ignorant fanatic wants to start a church on his own account, he immediately comes to get our Bible to build his church upon. And he is generally so ignorant that he does not even know who furnished it, but thinks that it came down from heaven, translated and all, including the binding and Russian leather.

The Christian world outside of this Church avoids this question. They will tell you that it came from heaven, and they will tell you that it came from the Prophets, and Apostles, and Evangelists, and those who wrote the Bible. They will tell you it came from ancient manuscripts. They will even tell you who translated the Bible as individuals; but it is too much for human nature, even for modern Christians, to acknowledge that this Church produced it. It is too much to expect. It is too great a thing. It places this Church too high. And then you must not expect that people know it, either. They are not taught it. And if they should question their leaders about how the

Bible came to them, they would often be told: "Oh, in a miraculous way God preserved it, and gave it to them." I do not expect more from the Christian world outside; but I do expect more from you, my friends, who are members of this Church, and members of this congregation. I do expect that you both know and appreciate the greatness and grandeur of this Church above every other in modern times; that it has done incomparably more for modern civilization than any other church on earth; that its intelligence and influence according to numbers, and its close adherence to the Word of God, and for a zealous guardianship of that Word, are beyond compare.

It is the Church of the Living God, the Pillar and Ground of the Truth.

GOD WITH MANY

And, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world (St. Matthew xxviii: 20).



HIS was said to the eleven Apostles. It would have been said to twelve had Judas Iscariot been there. There is a grand lesson to be learned here, that the Almighty never lodged the truth with one man, one prophet, or one Apostle. He lodged it with the eleven Apostles, with five hundred brethren at once, with a cloud of witnesses. There never was a time when a prophet did not go wrong; therefore the Almighty never built His Church or His truth upon a single prophet. Nobody ever thought that the truth lay with a single prophet of old. It never lay with the prophet Isaiah, or Jeremiah, or Ezekiel, or Daniel, alone. It lay with all of them, from Genesis to Malachi. And so it is to-day. There is no monopoly of truth anywhere, by any church, or by any man or prophet, high priest or priestess. Christ gave His truth to the great body of His Apostles, the great body of His disciples, the great body composing His

Church. And if that Church is like a mustard seed, which is the smallest of the seeds, and grows to a great tree, it is not likely that the eleven Apostles and five hundred brethren had grown in nineteen hundred years to be only one man, or one prophet or prophetess. That would be growing the wrong way. That is contrary to the very word of God. It must have grown in the nineteen hundred years to something like a nation or kingdom. We must be able to find the truth almost everywhere where the report of the Gospel has spread.

If the truth were to be lodged with one man at any time, it would seem that that time should be when Christ Himself was upon earth, when the greatest evidence could be had from heaven. But no. It was so important that we must have many witnesses, even then. One witness would never do. This one-man and one-prophet idea is the idea of error. This must be plain to every one who reads history, and can read it understandingly. It is the error of the Mohammedans, whose watchword is: "There is but one God, and Mohammed is His prophet." It is the error of Mormonism, which claims, "There is but one God, and Joseph Smith is His prophet." So you can go on all the way down the line, and pick out this gigantic error.

And when you go into the heathen religions, you find the same error; the same one man bearing witness of himself that he is the prophet of God; Buddha, Confucius, Zoroaster and all, each bearing witness to himself. You never find this one-man witness of himself in the Bible. And that is the way we may know the truth. Religious people will follow one man. They will follow a Luther, or a Calvin, or a Campbell, or a Knox, or a Wesley, or a Smith, or a Pope, and think they have all the truth, the only man and the only way. But you never find anything of that kind in the Bible. You will always find the disciples in the world in greatly increasing numbers, to whom our Lord said, "I am with you always; even unto the end of the world."

Sometimes we have an age of unbelief, and then, again, we have an age of credulity. Sometimes people believe too much; sometimes they believe on insufficient evidence. The Bible which says, "believe," says also, "prove all things"; and one command is as important as the other. Whenever a man starts a religion, it is to him the only religion in the world, the only truth; and this continues as long as the swaddling clothes of babyhood are wrapped about it. When the religion gets to any respectable age, then it endeavors to obtain recognition from other religious bodies

which it would not recognize before; and it feels very much hurt if it is not admitted and recognized at once. Such is the history of them all. Every independent religious movement would not recognize any other at first, until it arrived at the age of some sense, reason, and discretion; then it wanted to be recognized by those whom it would not recognize before.

Joseph Smith, the founder of Mormonism, would not recognize any other church. He had the only church. They preach that yet. Still, their common sense and reason have gotten the better of their doctrines, because they felt very much put out when they were refused admittance to the World's Fair Religions. Why should they feel outraged when they were the only church? If theirs is the only church, why do they want to mix up with the bad religions of the world? Why do they not accept their own logic? But there is one grand and glorious thing about this question, and that is, that whenever any one of these religions has lived long enough, it learns that it was at first mistaken; that it was not the only religion. If the leaders will not acknowledge that, the great body of the intelligent membership will. Every religion will find its true place in time. And the truth will be found to be, not with the single prophet and his followers, but with the great body

of Christ, the Apostles, the disciples, the brethren from the beginning of the world to the end of time.

Now suppose we ask Christian people which is the true church? Joseph Smith said he had a revelation that none of them was right; so he started the true church! Of course, he said he had a revelation from God to do it. Everybody has that. Now suppose we go out to some good business man of the world. I dare say he will give a better answer to our question. He will probably be annoyed at our question at first, because he knows how narrow the Christian answer often is. The man of the world, if he is a good man, will probably say that there is truth in all of them. And I believe that answer is more in accordance with the Word of God than the answer that we often hear from the Christian. People of the churches dwell on differences; the man of the world on agreements. The man of the world is right. The Christian says: See how we differ. We say: See how we agree. When we decide on differences we decide with one party, one prophet, one sect. But when we decide on agreements we decide with all. That is the ground to take, the platform on which to stand. Truth is that which is found everywhere. Truth is that which is universal, and held by everybody in the kingdom of


God. The great answer then to this great question is as the man of the world would give it, and gives it so often. All are right. We are only wrong when we differ. The great mistake of the past has been to build on differences, when we should have built on agreements, on what is universal, on what everybody believes everywhere. That is the truth; that cannot be error. Error is never universal, never held by everybody in all places.

What we want, then, and what we ought to have, are the men of the world, the business men; we want them in the Church; these men who have been so enlightened, no doubt by Christianity itself, that they give a better answer to these great questions than those who are already in the Church. We want them in the Church, in the kingdom, to teach these very principles which they know so well, even better than the Christians. We need you men of the world, men of business; we need you in the Church for the sake of the truth; for the sake of the truth you teach so well now. We need that truth taught in the kingdom. You are not far from the kingdom of heaven. We need your influence this way for the sake of your children, your families, your friends; for the sake of our city, our community, our commonwealth and

country. We need you for the sake of the boys and men that go wrong, and the girls that need protection. We need you for the sake of the world, which needs your good advice and rare wisdom.

THE SPIRIT OF GOD

And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters (Gen. i:2).

F the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters then, He moves upon the face of the land and waters now. He moved, then, to form harmony and order out of chaos, before man inhabited the earth. He moves now for the same purpose, where man moves. There is not a sufficient recognition among Christian people of the fact, the stupendous fact, that the Spirit of God moves among men on the face of the earth.

Perhaps we are willing to admit that the Almighty led the children of Israel from the darkness of Egypt to the light of Canaan—from bondage to freedom. Perhaps we are willing to admit that visions of heaven led wise men from the East to the great Liberator of the world, the Saviour. Perhaps we admit, too, that the Spirit led the liberty-loving people from the old world to the new. I think, too, that we will admit that the Great Spirit moved upon the waters of Manila

Bay, on that memorable May morning when Dewey appeared to wake up the world with the cannon's roar of freedom, and at Santiago, when men of Schley's fleet bowed their heads in prayer, while Spanish sailors slept beneath the deep.

As you look upon the Angelus, that masterpiece of art, you can almost hear the ringing, and the dying of the day, where peasants pause in labor and bow their heads in prayer; do you doubt in that somber stillness, the silent coming of the night, the passage of the Spirit for the day? Now as we believe that God's Spirit moves with men heroic and with deeds historic, He has told us of the opposite in His book, that He moves with humble men in little things, though less historic but not less heroic; for the inanimate grass has His solicitude and the little sparrow His care. You are of more value than grass or bird, therefore you have the abundance of His solicitude and care. The Spirit moves with you for peace, and order, and love, and guidance. You are not without the Spirit. There is no God-forsaken country. There may be a man-forsaken country; but God is everywhere, even upon the chaos of an uncreated earth. And when the first blade of grass appeared, and the first little tiny flower showed its petals to the sun, and the first little bird gasped for breath and food, God was there. Is He not

here? Is He only in very great things, and in very small things? Are we, who are neither great nor small, are we left out by Him? Is there no God with us? No Spirit? No Immanuel in the daily round of life? Hush! Stop! Listen! Learn! and believe!

But you will say, perhaps, that you cannot believe. Can you believe that the Spirit moved upon the waters before God created man? Do you believe God was with Noah? Do you believe He was with the Children of Israel? Do you believe He was with this country in its struggle for freedom? Do you believe He was with this country when it was rent in twain by internal strife? Do you believe that God was with Dewey at Manila and Hobson and Schley at Santiago? Do you believe that God looks after the grass at your feet, and the bird on your house-top, and not after you? God having a solicitude and care for all things else but you? You and your life and affairs the only things in the world that God has nothing to do with? There is no exception to the laws of nature, so I am told by scientists; and I have yet to learn that there are any exceptions to the laws of God. He cares for you. He cares for all. Nature says there is no exception. God says there is no exception. The Bible says there is no exception. *There is no exception!* While He took care

of Dewey on his armored cruiser, He took care of you in your house. While He was with Dewey in war, He was with you in peace. While He protected Dewey from the bullets, He protected you from harm. Don't you believe He protected Dewey? Ask Dewey!

You believe that God was with the Pilgrim Fathers when they came to America. I believe that God was with you when you came to Colorado. You believe that God is with the sons and brothers in the Philippines. I believe that He is with the mothers and sisters at home. There is nowhere we can go away from God. He is on all waters, and in all lands. He has had a hand in making this country, in forming this government, in establishing this city, in building this church. He has been our guide from our youth. He has guided us hither. Perhaps you do not believe that. I doubted once! I have doubted more than once; but this time I doubted my call to the ministry. I was at the theological seminary, and I told my pastor and professor of my doubt. Well, he said, you are here, and do you doubt that God has called you here? I had not thought of that. I did not doubt again.

We too often think and believe that God moves our feelings and conscience only, and our inward life, and that He has nothing to do with our out-

ward movements and our material prosperity. That is a great mistake. If such were the case, His Spirit would not have moved on the waters of old before man appeared. And then He guided the movements of His people of old, the children of Israel. And has God changed, so that He now only guides the inward life and spirit of the people? Never! But some people seem to think so. People seem to think that the Holy Spirit does not move on the waters; not even on the waters of Baptism. How many believe that the Spirit moves on the waters of Baptism, to say nothing of the waters of the deep where sailors go? How many there are who believe that the Spirit moves only in a revival, or at a conversion? Can you show me in the Bible where the Spirit is recorded to have moved at such a time? Is there a Doctor of Divinity who can show it to me? Is there a Bishop who can show it to me? Is it not time that we returned to the Word of God, and governed our words and deeds by that? You say the Bible *means* that. But I want to know what it *says*. Now there are hundreds of religious denominations which say the Bible means as many things. It is now high time that we return to what the Bible does say.

Does the Bible say that we receive the Spirit of God when we are converted? Christians say

so; but the Bible does not say so. You have your choice. The Bible says we receive the Holy Spirit in Baptism. It says we receive the Holy Spirit in Confirmation, or the laying on of hands. It says we receive Christ in the Lord's Supper. These are extraordinary gifts. But we are never told in the Bible that any of them are received in conversion. But then there are the ordinary gifts of grace, gifts of the Spirit that we may receive anywhere and everywhere, by land, by sea, far and near, by prayer and an acquiescence in God's law; by an endeavor to do His will, and to walk in His way. But it is true, too, that we must be converted and become as little children. "Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven." Then let us be converted and become as little children, and not be converted and be a reproach to little children, as so many converted people are—a reproach to little children! So many people are converted and become unlike little children. They become so unlike little children that little children are told that they must become converted, and become as converted men. That is the trouble. They reverse God's law. Little children, according to the Bible, are an example for converted men. Converted men must become like them. But modern Christianity says little children must be con-

verted and become as converted men. Little children are our example. Converted men are not our example, if we follow the Word of God.

Let us study the Word of God, and learn where the Spirit moves.

PRAYER FOR OTHERS

But He answered her not a word (St. Matt. xv: 23).



IN this Whitsun season, when we commemorate the coming of the Holy Ghost, and pray that He might come upon us, we are frequently discouraged in the exercise of that great duty and privilege by an apparent rejection, or by the coldness of a delayed answer. We are therefore led to doubt the efficiency of prayer, and we say, "What is the use of praying?" Prayer is not always answered immediately, even when offered in a right spirit. It is with prayer as with other things. There must sometimes be a protracted effort, a faithful perseverance. There is a course to be run. There is a progress in prayer, faithful progress of approach to God. But this progress is an encouragement of itself, and an answer. The very terms in which Christ encouraged prayer imply perseverance. When He bids us *ask*, it is not His meaning that we should grow sullenly silent if the first word is not heard, for, He adds, *seeking* and *knocking*, which imply continuing our

search till we have found, and standing at the door till He thinks fit to open.

Christ related two parables in proof of this. One in St. Luke xi., in which a man obtained by the force of importunity, by urgent requests of troublesome frequency at a time of night so unreasonable that the considerations of friendship could not otherwise prevail. The other, in chapter xviii., in which a poor, oppressed widow wearied even a barbarous and profligate judge into justice. Let us therefore learn, with the Canaanitish woman, that we may pray at times, and God will answer us not a word.

Jesus departed into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, undoubtedly for the purpose of safety and rest. But even to these distant cities of heathendom had the fame of His signs and wonders penetrated. No sooner had He reached the neighborhood of these old Phoenician cities, than it became evident that He could not be hid. A woman sought Him. She followed the little company of wayfarers with passionate entreaties: "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David; my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil." We might imagine that our Lord would answer such a prayer with immediate and tender approbation, and all the more because, in granting her petition, He would have been representing the intention of His

kingdom to the three greatest branches of the pagan world, for this woman was by birth a Canaanite and a Syro-Phoenician; by position a Roman subject; and by culture and language a Greek. And her appeal for mercy to the Messiah of the Chosen people might well look like the first-fruits of that harvest in which the good seed should grow up hereafter in Tyre and Sidon, and Carthage, and Greece, and Rome. But Jesus—and as has well been said, is not this one of the numberless indications that we are dealing, not with loose and false tradition, but with solid facts?—"Jesus answered her not a word." In no other single instance are we told of similar apparent coldness on the part of Christ.

Weary with the importunity of her cries, the disciples begged Him to send her away. But, as if even their intercession would be unavailing, He said, "I am not sent but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." She was not of the house of Israel, except by faith, and that faith was to be proved. Then she came and fell at His feet and worshipped Him, saying, "Lord, help me." Could He indeed remain untouched by that sorrow? Could He reject that appeal? And would He leave her to return and watch over the life-long agony of her demoniac child? Calmly and coldly came from those lips that never yet had answered

with anything but mercy to a suppliant's prayer, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." Such an answer might well have struck a chill into a human soul. And, had He not seen that hers was that rare trust that can see mercy and acceptance, even in an apparent rejection, He would not so have answered her. But all the snows of her native Lebanon could not quench the fire of love that was burning on the altar of her heart, and, prompt as an echo, came forth the glorious and immortal answer: "Truth, Lord; then let me share the condition, not of the children, but of the dogs; for even the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table."

She had triumphed, and more than triumphed. Not one moment longer did her Lord prolong the agony of her suspense. "Oh, woman," He exclaimed, "great is thy faith, be it unto thee even as thou wilt." And, with his usual beautiful and graphic simplicity, St. Mark ends the narrative with the touching words, "And when she had come to her house she found the devil gone out and her daughter laid upon the bed."

Here is a most beautiful lesson taught which we do not often see, and which we are very loth to accept: the efficacy of the prayers and faith of another. We are too easily lulled into the belief that a mother's prayers and faith for her child

are of no avail. The beautiful lesson taught here should set at rest such a notion. It is not said that the daughter prayed, or had faith. Christ did not commend the faith of the child but only of the mother, and on account of the mother's faith and prayer, so highly commended, was the healing of the demoniac child performed. In fact, the condition of the child would preclude, as we might suppose, any faith and prayer whatever. Nor is this a solitary instance of Christ's healing on the faith and prayers of another. In the second miracle recorded by St. Matthew, our Lord gave life and health to one who came to His notice, not by virtue of his own faith, but of the faith of his master. So also in the case of the "sick of the palsy" in the next chapter, Jesus seeing their faith (*i.e.*, the faith of the bearers), said unto the sick of the palsy, "Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." In the ninth chapter we have no less than three instances of Jesus healing on the strength of the faith of others. What an encouragement this should be to sponsors and parents, who profess faith for children in Baptism, and for us all who believe and pray for our brethren. Do not give up praying for one another, and having faith in Him who can answer to-day as He did in Canaan of old.

We may now be better able to see how God

answers prayer. Many of us may be like this woman of Canaan. We may now be able to see, though at first He should answer us not a word, that He stands ready with the richest of blessings which He will dispense in His own good time. He may refuse us as He refused the Canaanitish woman, but only for a season; as also on another occasion He would not go down to the nobleman's house. And, again, when He heard that Lazarus was sick, He abode two days where He was.

We are not told the reason for these cold refusals and apparent rejections. But be sure the cause is with us and not with God. It may be to prepare us for the blessings we ask, that we may derive from them the greatest good. It may be to test our trust in God, that He might crown us with a more glorious reward. Probably we may catch a glimpse of the reason in His last remarks to the woman, "Oh, woman, great is thy faith."

Had we not such a noble example of perseverance in prayer, I am afraid our faith would fail. Had not Jesus answered not a word, had He not refused the second time to heal the demoniac child, and the third time, what reason could we have now to persevere in our supplications to God? Had He healed the demoniac child as He healed the leper, had He gone down to the nobleman's house without delay, had He hur-

ried away to the death of Lazarus, then we would have no example of delay, no example of refusal. We could only say that Jesus answered with the promptness of an echo. We would lose all hope at the first refusal, or at the least delay. But now we have an example of the most faithful perseverance. I know now I may plead with God and He may answer me not a word. But I am encouraged to continue, even to the wearying of my neighbors. Now I may be met with the coldness of a refusal. But the woman still continued, and shall not I? And receive the encomium of the woman of Canaan, "Oh, great is thy faith," and the reward, "be it unto thee even as thou wilt."

NOT SACRIFICE, BUT MERCY

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice (St. Matt. ix:13).



ONE of the grandest conceptions of Christianity is the liberty of the life of a Christian. Man is constantly subjected to ideas, traditions, and principles so-called, laid down by others. If he flee from one he falls into another. And one of the benefits to be derived from following in the footsteps of Jesus is the liberty that it brings. When Christ came into this world, the law of God had made it hard for the sinner, especially as the Pharisees had interpreted it. And there was a grand liberation felt at the preaching of Jesus. The law of nature had made it hard for a man, and so had the law of Moses. The world was in waiting for One who could declare with the authority of heaven, some authority as great as that of Moses, and that of nature: "I will have mercy and not sacrifice." What had been demanded before was sacrifice. The law of nature violated, demanded a sacrifice. The law of Moses violated,

demanding a sacrifice. Every violation of law demanded a sacrifice. There was no escape. The world was seeking an escape, but there was none to be found until the echo of the world's cry had been almost lost on the hills of despair, and the Messiah came, the long promised, long expected Messiah, which was echoed upon the ears of the world from the sweet promises of God; the Messiah who could stand up and say in the face of all law which had lived and grown and strengthened for thousands of years: I will have mercy and not sacrifice.

Such a voice had never been heard before. Such a doctrine apparently in violation of all law, human and divine, had never been heard before. Who was this so presumptuous as to declare that the law of God should no more demand its sacrifices, and nature her penalty? In the face of all that had been taught and preached and practised for thousands of years, the world was yearning for just this voice of mercy. And the old traditions broke. The old faith failed. The old moorings gave way, and there was a grand rush for the humble teacher of Nazareth. What do you say? No sacrifice? Only mercy? And then, is this voice from heaven, or is it from men? And time and the world have proved ever since that this is the voice from heaven. And it did not take them

of old long to discover that this was the voice from heaven. Ah, they had heard enough of the voice of earth: Sacrifice! sacrifice! ever sacrifice. Oh, let the smoky clouds of the sacrifices be blown aside that we might see the bright and glorious Mercy Seat. And before Christ, the last sacrifice, all sacrifices vanished. And do you wonder they vanished at such a culmination? And Mercy took its place. Do you wonder that the words of Mercy were called the glad tidings? Do you doubt that they were the glad tidings of joy to those people of old?

There seems nowadays to be a lack of appreciation of the fact that the words of Christ are glad tidings of joy. I do not think that Christians themselves appreciate the Gospel as preëminently glad tidings of joy. They seem, I fear, to many too much as the sad tidings of sorrow, rather. And is it not because the doctrine of the law of nature, with her penalty, has crept into our pulpits and our pews, and hushed the voice of mercy? Is it not because the law of Moses, with the sacrifices, is heard above the voice of mercy, that we of the world have lost much of the idea of the glad tidings of joy, and think about Christianity as anything but joy and gladness, especially as sacrifice and sadness. I believe that Christian people and Christianity are responsible for this state of

affairs. We have need, as of old, of the voice from heaven saying, I will have mercy and not sacrifice. We think we believe not in sacrifices in these modern times. But they of old never preached sacrifices more than we demand them. In the state there are sacrifices demanded. In society there are sacrifices enforced. Where, I ask, in all our modern life, among all these demands for sacrifices, shall we look for mercy? You say, in the Church. Where in the Church do I find but the law laid down, with all the penalties for its violation, all the sacrifices to appease an offended justice?

I take up volumes of sermons of the greatest preachers, and they make me weary, once lauded to the skies for their eloquence, and they make me weary with sacrifices. I hear sermons from the most renowned pulpits, and I hear sacrifices. I go about in Christian communities, where I would expect to hear some echo of the voice of mercy from the hills of Judea; but I hear in vain, sacrifices, sacrifices. Oh, for the voice of mercy, somewhere to lighten the burden of a sin-stained soul! If not found in the law, if not found in society, if not found in the churches, let it be found, O Lord, among some lonely people who have learned and felt the Spirit of a Saviour, so that the smothered voice from heaven may yet break forth as of

old; that the world may see and know that the Gospel of Christ is, in deed and in truth, the glad tidings of great joy. Let the people of the day who demand nothing but sacrifices in life, in works, in amusements, in everything, be set aside by the voice of Jesus who took part in the innocent festivities of youth and broke the bonds of the Pharisaical fences, and broke down the walls and the partitions; broke the Sabbath, made wine and ate with publicans and sinners.

But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice.

GOD'S KINGDOM NOT TO BE DEFENDED BY THE SWORD

My Kingdom is not of this world; if My Kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews; but now is My Kingdom not from hence (St. John xviii: 36).



WE have not yet arrived at a time when wars have ceased. I do not think that the blessings of liberty, and law, and peace, are always too dearly bought with the sacrifices of war. I do not think that a declaration of war is wrong, though it is an evil. But there is a cause so good that it does not demand the declaration of war; a cause in which the conquest of war is not victory, and in which apparent defeat is triumphant.

Can you tell me why historians sheathe in silence the Puritan sword, and laud their deeds of self-sacrifice? Can you tell me why so many branches of the Church bury in oblivion the history of the Church of the middle ages, and deny their connection with it? It is sometimes coward-

ice. They cannot specify and see the real reason, but behold great evils, and believe it all hopelessly evil, because the Church wielded the sword which Christ told them to put up.

Christ's kingdom is not of this world, i.e., it does not derive its power and authority from the world; but Christ's kingdom is *in* the world. It would seem that the words of the text would be sufficient to show that Christians should not declare war in defense of their religion. But the general impression among people is that they may. And how many have carried this opinion into practice; even our honored forefathers who fought on our own soil for religious freedom, and from whom we might have expected just the opposite. But what church is there which can stand up and say with Christ, what every church ought to be able to say, "If our church were of this world then would our church members fight, that we should not be delivered to our enemies"?

When I was at the theological seminary, and this subject came up, I looked with amazement and doubt. To be sure, it was not right to convert people as Charlemagne did in the ninth century at the point of the sword. But, thought I, could we not fight for our religion in self-defense? Could we not, as the Puritans did, fight for religious liberty? My professor answered, No.

I was astounded. Should we give up our religion, then, when demanded at the point of the bayonet? By no means, said the professor. Do not give up. Die, if necessary. But do not fight! I was slow to believe. I did not have to believe it. But after much thought and study I could not help but believe it, if I accepted either the practice or precepts of our Lord and the early Christian Church. "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My disciples fight." Christ said to him who drew the sword in defense of his Lord, "Put up again thy sword into his place; for all they that take the sword, shall perish with the sword. Thinkest thou that I cannot now pray to My Father, and He shall presently give Me more than twelve legions of angels?" (Matt. xxv: 52 and 53).

I do not find one iota of proof which goes to show that we should fight for Christianity. Everything in the life of our Lord tells of the contrary. He often withdrew from the infuriated crowd for safety, but never withdrew from the right or the truth, and never raised the sword in self-defense when attacked for His religion. If it is right to fight for Christianity in self-defense, then martyrdom would be impossible and unnecessary, because no one who falls in self-defense falls a martyr. If you believe in martyrdom, you must do and teach in accordance with the example of

Christ and the early Church. He did not call down the twelve legions of angels. Neither was there a single appeal to arms in the Church of the early ages. Christ did not call upon His disciples to defend Him. Nay, He healed the wound inflicted in His defense. His disciples followed Him in this regard, even through the dark valley of death.

The Christians for the first three hundred years and more, through ten long and bloody persecutions, took only the ordinary precautions of safety. And those were the years of the purest Christianity. When Christians violated this principle, and drew the sword which Christ told them to put up, a cloud of darkness lowered upon the Church. Had it never unsheathed the sword, its history would have shone in a purer and more resplendent light to-day. When we write the history of the Pilgrim fathers, we like to sheathe in historical silence the sword which they brandished in the air, and dwell upon their trials and sufferings and sacrifices. And thus the spirit within, unconsciously though it be, tells us when we write the history of Christianity, to "Put up again the sword into his place." There is one thing that will prove more destructive to the religion of the Mormons than the righteous sword of the govern-

ment can prove, and that is the sword they wield themselves.

It is not right, as so many did in times of great persecution, which are also times of great fanaticism, to rush into the fury of the persecutors and court death to win a martyr's crown. It is our duty to take all the ordinary precautions of safety, even to appeal to the government, as St. Paul appealed at Rome, for protection. But having done all that, die sooner than draw the sword. If the government should persecute Christianity now as Rome did in the days of heathendom, we should do as St. Paul did—not draw the sword, but suffer. Then would Christianity grow as it did in the early years, and become a power which would need no sword in its defense.

I have often heard it said by shrewd men, it is well that the Christian Church is divided, and it is well that one Church is about as strong as another; otherwise a dangerous power would be developed. It may be true; and it is a pity if it is true. But with principles like these, would not safety lie where danger was before? "Put up again thy sword into his place." "If My kingdom were of this world, then would My servants fight." "My kingdom is not of this world."

I need not ask you, Are these precepts right? But are they not also in accord with the highest

public policy? With expediency? I believe these are questions which come properly under this head. Need a government ever fear the growth and power of a Church founded on principles so salutary and so exalted? We do not forbid Christians drawing the sword at the command of the civil government. We are taught by the word of God to obey our civil authorities, unless that obedience should be contrary to the express law of God.

Would Christ and His Apostles boast of fighting for religious liberty? Would the Christians of the first four hundred years boast of such a war? Are we in this respect at least behind the early fathers? But our joy lies in this: that our fathers gained a national independence through the sacrifices of war. Does it not behoove us and the government to guard with a watchful eye those who would teach the contrary? Or need we predict their doom when Christ said, "They who take the sword shall perish with the sword." How does fighting for religion seem when weighed in the balance? The sword has darkened the pages of religious history, and men try to mend it by cutting out the leaves; but let them remain, let the truth be seen that we may blacken them no more. The armor to bear in God's battle is more enduring than burnished brass, or polished


steel. It is more powerful and penetrating than the fire of musketry, or the roll of artillery. The armor of God is the breastplate of righteousness, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, the sword of the spirit, and the feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace.

Ah! even in celebrating the sacred memory of the departed heroes of the late civil war, we naturally and wisely dwell upon their sufferings and sacrifices, and thereby, unconsciously and unintentionally, and therefore the more powerfully, acknowledge the strength of the Christian armor. Then learn the Christian warfare against the powers of evil. Then

“Soldiers of Christ arise
And put your armor on,
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through His eternal Son.”

SIN, THE LEPROSY

And there came a leper to Him, beseeching Him, and kneeling down to Him, and saying unto Him, If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth His hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean (St. Mark i: 40, 41).

T was in the northern part of Palestine, in the hills of Galilee. It was soon after that night of ceaseless prayer under the open sky, followed at early dawn by the choice of Twelve Apostles, and by a long address to them and to a vast multitude, that Jesus wound His way down the mountain side, weary with continuous toil, followed by fragments of that immense throng which had listened to the Sermon on the Mount, and which were now dispersing in various directions. A multitude held spellbound by such a preacher and prophet, would be loath to leave a scene where they held such communion with nature and with God. So Jesus led the way toward the sea of Galilee, across the plain of Gennesareth.

As He descended the mountain and was just

entering one of the little towns, a pitiable spectacle met His eyes. A poor man appeared before Him, with bare head and rent garments, and covered lip, a leper—full of leprosy, smitten with the worst and foulest form of that loathsome disease; a disease most hopeless and terrible from its ineradicable and progressive nature when once thoroughly seated in the system, a disease, the most corrupting and contagious known in those countries. That poor afflicted mortal, in accordance with the cruel unchristian custom of the day, was not taken to a hospital to be cared for and cured; but was separated from home and friends, and was banished from civil and religious communion to roam and rave in solitudes, to aggravate the disease and to hurry on the end of his hopeless existence. It was on His way from place to place that Jesus met with such pitiful misery as this. The leper came to Him with agonies full of entreaty, falling on his knees before Him; then, in the anguish of his heart, he fell upon his face with but one ray of hope, and that centered in Him whom he approached with a mingled feeling of faith and doubt, in so much that he simply ventured to suggest to Jesus, “If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean.” The poor man doubted whether He would; and do you wonder? What reason had he to hope that the young

Prophet of Nazareth would do for him what his own brethren could not do? He must have had a stupendous faith in Jesus when he cried, "Thou canst make me clean." Prompt as an echo came the answer to his faith, "I will, be thou clean."

Sometimes Jesus delayed His answer to a sufferer's prayer. But we are never told that there was a moment's pause when a leper cried to Him. Leprosy was the acknowledged type of sin, and Christ would teach us that the heartfelt prayer of the sinner to be purged and cleansed is always met with immediate acceptance. When David, the type of all true penitents, cried with intense contrition, "I have sinned against the Lord," Nathan could instantly convey to him God's gracious message, "The Lord also hath put away thy sins; thou shalt not die." Instantly stretching forth his hand, our Lord touched the leper, and he was cleansed. It was a glorious violation of the letter of the Law which attached ceremonial pollution to a leper's touch; but it was at the same time a glorious illustration of the spirit of the Law which was, that mercy is better than sacrifice. The hand of Jesus was not polluted by touching the leper's body; but the leper's whole body was cleansed by the touch of that holy hand.

But what of the cleansing of this leper?

There are a great many lepers who are not cleansed. There are thousands of sufferers now-a-days whose sufferings do not cease, except in death. And this leper was cleansed, only to live a few years perhaps. He was snatched from the jaws of death, only to return and die. But this is not all. There is a deeper and more spiritual meaning in that scene of Galilee. Can we not see the misery of a world stricken with the leprosy of sin, banished from the pleasures of Paradise, can we not see many separated from righteousness, peace and purity, from home and friends, to roam and die? Ah! now that scene in Galilee comes home to you and to me! Are not all of us more or less afflicted with that leprosy? Can we not learn a lesson of the leper to come to Jesus; to fall down on our knees before Him, even if we should have no more faith and hope than the leper had, and use his doubting language, "Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean." Just as the leper, expelled from society, was cleansed and purified by Christ, so may the sinner be. But he must do as that leper did; he must come to Jesus. Jesus did not go to the leper. He was on His way to Capernaum. He will not thrust His favor upon us. He is no uninvited guest. He brings salvation to our very doors. He will stand there and knock, and knock,

but He will not enter until we open and invite Him in. "Behold I stand at the door and knock!"

Some of you will probably think you have not faith enough to come. Learn of the leper to come with your doubts, then; but come not boasting about them; come with humility; come with sorrow and grief for sin; bring them on your knees, and cry, "Lord, I believe; help Thou my unbelief." Some of you will say you are not good enough to come. Learn again of the leper, who brought all the loathsomeness of leprosy to Christ. What are you going to do with your leprosy, if you are not going to bring it to Christ? Are you going to wash somewhere, and then come clean to Christ? The simple example of the almost hopeless leper coming to Jesus in dead earnest, just as he was, with his faith, with his doubts, with his leprosy, is worth volumes of theology and dogma to you and to me. Behold the way pointed out in this scene laid in Galilee. See an illustration of sinful man in the abandoned leper. See a picture of the awfulness of sin in that foulest and most terrible of diseases; see Jesus passing by; see the awfulness of sin kneeling, and Almighty power standing, touching, healing! Then learn a lesson to-day, a practical lesson. Jesus is passing by. He will not always be passing by. and will you not go to Him now? It will not do

to say you are not good enough; neither was the leper clean enough. But that was just the reason why he went. Can you give one good reason why the leper should not come to Jesus? If so, then you can give a reason why sinners should not come to Him now. When you come, come with humility. There was no pride about that leper. Let us keep him ever in mind.

If we fall down before Christ and breathe the heartfelt prayer of the leper with as much faith as he had, Christ will as truly answer to-day as He did of old, "I will, be thou clean."

RISING FROM THE DEATH OF SIN

And when the Lord saw her, He had compassion on her, and said unto her, Weep not. And He came and touched the bier; and they that bare him stood still. And He said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. And he that was dead sat up, and began to speak. And He delivered him to his mother (St. Luke vii: 13, 14, 15).



HIS was the first mighty work of the kind that Jesus had performed, the raising of the dead son of the widow of Nain. This was a bright and welcome period of His ministry. He had left Capernaum, not only with His devoted disciples, but He was followed by rejoicing and adoring crowds. They had traveled southward to the plain of Esdraelon, then mounted the steep and rocky road which led to the city of Nain. Nain means "fair." As this glad procession was climbing this narrow and rocky road which leads to the gate of the fair city, they met another and a sad procession, bearing a young man that was dead, to lay him in one of those sepulchres with which the road was lined. The pleasant city was now

a place of mourning. There was a more than ordinary pathos in that scene, and probably a wail wilder and sincerer than ordinary lamentation.

We know but little about this dead man, but that little is couched in language so absolutely simple that it is all the more deeply moving, and to Jewish ears it would convey a sense of anguish deeper still. "And he was the only son of his mother, and she a widow." Such sorrow appealed irresistibly to the sympathetic heart of Jesus. Pausing only to say to the mother, "Weep not," He approached, and—heedless once more of the ceremonial observance of the Mosaic law—touched the bier. Unbidden, but filled with indefinable awe, the bearers of the bier stood still. And then through the hearts of the stricken mourners, and through the hearts of the silent multitude, there thrilled the calm utterance, "Young man, arise!" Would that dread word thrill also through the unknown mysterious solitudes of death? Would it thrill through the impenetrable darkness of the more than midnight, which has ever concealed from human vision the world beyond the grave? It did. The dead sat up, and began to speak; and He delivered him to his mother.

No wonder fear fell upon all. They thought probably of the great prophets Elijah and Elisha. They, too, in that very region had restored to

lonely women their dead, only sons; and truly they concluded that "God had visited His people."

We have seen what Jesus did for the young man at Nain. It is a type, a picture of what He is doing now, and of what He will do in the future. Now the voice of Jesus raises the dead to newness of life. According to the Gospel of St. John, Jesus says, "The hour is coming; and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."

We do not see men's bodies raised from the dead now. But there is another kind of death. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, St. Paul speaks of a "death in trespasses and sins." The soul of a man who is dead in sins is without feeling, without power to serve God or man acceptably; therefore such a man is called dead in the sight of God. And His call to all such is, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead." He, and He only, can raise the spiritually dead, and give them a new life, with new feelings and new powers.

The raising of the son of the widow of Nain typifies also the general resurrection. Hereafter the voice of God will call the dead from their graves to a better life beyond. He has the keys of death and hades. He has power over the unseen world. And so we are told that He will one

day make use of that power; that He will, with a wonderful awakening, call back from death all that sleep in the dust of the earth, whether they will or no. We are told that voice will bring sorrow to some, and joy to others. It is only those who have been raised to a new life here, who will rise with joy there. It is only those who have welcomed the voice of God here, who will welcome it there. We may heed His voice here, we must heed it there.

Have we taken our stand with God and Christ and the truth, and testified to the same before the world and our fellow men, by following in the footsteps of our Lord, by taking up His cause, by acting upon a living faith and not trembling upon a doubt? How many, alas, how many are dragged down from a possible glorious existence on a quivering, soul-destroying doubt and enervating indifference, and let the light of faith burn low. But do not you grope your way about in the darkness of doubt which may surround you; doubt is no talent. But arise and look through the darkness, and you will see a light; it is the light of faith. God placed it there for you. Walk in the direction of the light, and it will grow larger and burn brighter, till finally it will light you safely through the dark valley. Oh! let us hear the voice of the Son of God, as did the son of the widow of Nain, and

rise from the dead; for if we hear it not, we may hear no other; and they who hear it live. And when we pour out the impassioned prayer of Luther, "Oh! my God, punish us rather with pestilence, with sickness, with war, with anything rather than Thou be silent to us," let us remember that such silence is never that God doth not speak, but that we will not hear.

To-day Jesus walks upon the rock road of this troublesome world, lined with sepulchral caves into which the dead in sin are borne. He meets the sorrowing to say, Weep not. And to the dead He says, Arise! Is it not easier to be heard across the valley of death, is it not easier to be heard through the veil which separates mortals from immortals, time from eternity, than to be heard across the gulf which separates men from their God? Oh, let us rise and fix our eye on the light that burns in the distance. It may be afar off, but it points out the direction in which to go. It may burn low, but it will burn brighter and illumine our path as we approach it. It is the light of faith. God placed it there for our guidance. If we walk not by it we may see no other. And they who walk by it live. If you hearken to the voice of God, which has no uncertain sound, and walk by the light of faith which is no flickering flame, you will find, as myriads of your fathers have found,

that you have, if not the only, yet assuredly the best, comfort in sorrow, the best warning in danger, the best hope in death; when all else is bitter, it shall be sweeter than honey and the honey-comb, and when all else is dross, it shall be as ten times refined gold.

LOOK TO JESUS

Looking unto Jesus (Hebrews xii:2).



HILE Benjamin Franklin was lying on his death-bed, he bade his nurse to bring a picture which he named, and to fasten it on the wall opposite his bed, that he might look upon it when he pleased. And what do you suppose that picture was? Some ancient historic heirloom which he dearly prized? Some scene of scientific progress; some masterpiece of art? It was simply the Saviour on the cross! If it be true, as we are told, that Dr. Franklin died while gazing upon that picture, his countenance lighting up with a sweet and pleasant smile, it is not true that he lived and died an infidel. Poor and pitiable are the hopes of the moralist or the philosopher who does not look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

How, then, shall we do this? By dwelling upon Him in our imagination, until we can bring back, as in a picture, the form of the Man Christ Jesus, who, eighteen centuries ago, suffered on the

cross in Judea? Is it by fixing our eyes upon such a representation as we sometimes see in the windows of churches? Such pictures no doubt impress many minds for good. But such representations are only means to an end. The "looking unto Jesus" referred to by the Apostle is an act of faith, and the exercise of undoubting confidence and love. Nevertheless, it is a faith which shows itself and proves itself by outward acts of obedience to a law.

See those parents bringing their children to Holy Baptism. Why do they do it? Because they desire to have them christened, as their forefathers have always been? Because it is a convenient occasion for bestowing what is called their "given names"? Surely, these were not the motives which influenced their minds. Those parents were looking unto Jesus. They remembered His tender care for little children, how He set forth their simplicity and trustfulness as patterns to grown persons who would seek for entrance into His kingdom. They are looking unto Him to bless their children in this ordinance of His appointment, and to receive them for His own by adoption.

Again, at the Bishop's visitation, why do persons come forward to be confirmed and blessed by him? Is it only a form, or ceremony? Is it

simply a sham or show? Oh! I pity those who dare to say or think so. The candidates for Confirmation who have been properly instructed, or are properly informed, are "Looking unto Jesus" when they thus kneel before His chosen servant, and receive the blessing which he is authorized to bestow. They are looking unto Him in whose service they thus solemnly enlist. They are looking unto Him for strength to wage a good warfare against evil.

And why is it that, month by month, God's faithful people draw near His altar, and eat of the living bread, and drink of the cup of salvation? Is it a hypocritical act? Is it done in solemn mockery? Is it designed to impose upon the world? Ah! we are thus "looking unto Jesus." We seek fresh supplies of His gracious and ready help. We behold Him, as it were, presiding at the heavenly feast, which His goodness has thus prepared for the weary and heavy laden soul.

Watch that poor troubled one as she retires to the privacy of her room, and wrestles with God in earnest prayer. Some heavy weight of care is crushing her to the earth. No human power can lift it off. She has gone to the sanctuary for help. She is "looking unto Jesus." Has not the promise been given by Him who cannot tell a lie, "Call upon Me in the time of trouble and I will

hear thee, and thou shalt praise Me"? Though life with its sunny skies and its flowery fields is fading steadily to the departing soul, yet gloomy darkness and disturbing doubts are lighted up with an unwavering faith by "looking unto Jesus." Wasting health and decaying strength render the Saviour more and more precious to the believer's soul. The still small voice of His matchless love is whispering in the contrite sufferer's ear, "I have conquered death, and brought life and immortality to light in the Gospel."

Let us fall in with the funeral train as it moves slowly onward, bearing the corpse of a departed friend to its last resting place. At length the spot is reached, and all stand with uncovered heads around the open grave. The coffin is lowered to its place in solemn silence, and then—"Earth to earth, ashes to ashes, dust to dust!" Such is the end of worldly hopes.

Nay, not the end! Listen to those comfortable words which the minister of God is speaking now: "We commit the body of our departed brother to the ground, looking for the general resurrection at the last day, and the life of the world to come, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

We have traced the pathway of a Christian from the cradle to the grave. But by the eye of faith we can penetrate within the veil, and follow

him beyond the narrow boundaries of time. The Archangel's trump awakes the sleeping dead. The Eternal Judge is seated on His throne. Fear and dismay seize the guilty throng who stand upon the King's left hand. And why should those on the right appear less anxious and unconcerned? They are "Looking unto Jesus." That same blessed and merciful Lord who died for them, whom they confessed before men in Baptism, Confirmation, and Holy Communion, and glorified in lives of faithful obedience, is now to be their Judge. They know in whom they have believed, they only await the summons to enter the joy of their Lord.

There is another way in which we must look unto Jesus, and a most practical one. We never should allow a day to pass without comparing our actions with what Christ would do under similar circumstances. We should read the Bible, and hear it read, with the view of throwing light upon our life; we should thus be guided into the right and the truth. Whenever we are in doubt as to what to do, "Look unto Jesus" for what He did under similar circumstances. Then shall our life and conduct be made broad and deep and free in truth and charity.

The question should not be so much what this or that Church teaches, as what did Christ teach by word and deed. It is well to know what

Churches teach, but we should always correct them by the life of Christ. And I desire you to note this: How broad, and liberal, and charitable, and compassionate, and free, Christ is as compared with the churches of His day and ours. Do you know, I believe that Christ's actions would not be tolerated to-day much more than they were in His own day! This also is the way in which we must look unto Jesus!

To what source are we looking for comfort and support amidst the duties and trials and troubles of life, the pains of death and awful realities of the judgment? Is it to any earthly object? If so, our hopes will be sure to fail. We may live on in delusion until the trying moment comes, and then, when the support is most needed, we will surely find ourselves leaning on a broken reed.

More than likely some of us belong to that large class of unhappy people who only allow themselves to think of the present, and who have formed no plans, and made no provision for the future. Is this wise? Is it right? Is it doing justice to yourselves? Is it showing proper regard for God or humanity? When He has done so much to point out the good way, the way of salvation, is it asking too much that we should exert ourselves a little to walk in it? None of us has been left altogether in darkness or doubt. God, of His

infinite love, has showed us what is good and right, and what He wishes us to do. Oh! do not let us set our heart upon this world first, because it will fail. Seek first the Kingdom of God. Live not for the present only. Make timely preparation for eternity. Love God and your neighbor. Do not be ashamed of being a Christian. "Look unto Jesus!" as Benjamin Franklin did, that great scientist and thinker, and leader of his age.

THE CHURCH

The Church of the Living God (I. Tim. iii:15).



OME honest simple soul will sometimes join the Roman Church, and then come back and tell us what she has learned about it. I wish such would come to me; I could tell them a thing or two. And then she will tell us which is the oldest Church, the original Church—the Roman Church, of course! It is simply the same old story of our race. It is believing in the Church as we do in the state; the story of the dark, inferior race of southern Europe, instead of our own white, superior race of the north, from which we are descended. Let us look at these great claims to be the oldest Church, the original Church, the first Church, and only first Church. They are much like many other claims; they will not stand the light of day, nor searching powers of reason.

One of the strange things of history is that the Greek Church does not enter into the consideration of modern thought. The greatest Church that the world ever saw for a thousand years is entirely left out of our modern consideration. Why, if such an element should be left out of an astronomi-

cal calculation, the result would be disastrous, and yet we do it in religion without a smile, without a wink, without a quiver. Now we know, if we know anything, that the first Church was not Roman or Latin, but Greek. That Greek Church is living to-day all over the eastern half of Europe and western Asia, where it always has lived, and has lived every day since the days of Christ and the Apostles; and, for the first thousand years of the Christian era, it was the greatest Church the world ever saw. For the first thousand years it was in communion with the Church of Rome, but for the past nine hundred years it has not been in communion with the Church of Rome. If the Greek Church were not so far away; if it were not so far away as Russia and Greece and Turkey in Europe and Asia, it would compel us to listen to the truth of this thing. But she is so far away that it is safe for us to entirely ignore her, and build up our own theory on the subject.

Draw a line from north to south through the middle of Europe, and, approximately speaking, at the time of Christ, on the east side of that line the Church spoke Greek, and on the west side of that line the Church spoke Latin; and that fact has not changed much for nineteen hundred years. It is largely so to-day. East of that line was the Greek Church, and west of that line was the Latin,

or Roman Church. These two Churches were very well defined for a thousand years, and they are very well defined to-day. What right have you and I to consider which was the first Church, without taking into account the Greek Church? If the Greek Church were here, it would be unnecessary for me to speak. It is well able to take care of itself, and to defend its own claims, and the high position which it holds in this regard. What was the Church when it was first started on the day of Pentecost in the upper room at Jerusalem, in the year of our Lord 33? Was it Roman? Was it Latin? Was it in Latin territory? No, sir! It was Greek, and in Greek territory. They wrote Greek and spoke Greek, and the entire Bible was written in Greek—Old Testament and New Testament. The Old Testament was translated into Greek, and the New Testament was written originally in Greek—every bit of it—unless it could be said that the Gospel according to St. Matthew was not written originally in Greek. If not, it was written originally in Hebrew, and afterwards in Greek. Even the Epistle to the Romans was written in Greek, which was not till a quarter of a century after the Church was founded at Jerusalem, and even that time was probably before St. Paul had ever visited Rome.

At what time the Church was founded at

Rome I do not know exactly. I do not think any one knows exactly when. But whenever it was founded, that marked the time of the origin of the Church of Rome. But no one will say, who has the least grain of reason, that the Church of Rome was founded as early as the Church of Jerusalem or the Greek Church. Everybody admits that the Church was founded first at Jerusalem, and not at Rome. And if there is any first and second about it, the Greek Church was founded first, and the Roman Church was started afterwards as an expansion from Jerusalem, or from the Greek Church. Just as the Church of England was started in the earliest days of Christianity from the Church of Ephesus in Asia Minor, or, what is the same thing, from the Greek Church. The Roman Church and the Church of England, therefore, have exactly the same origin. They are both expansions from the Greek or Eastern Church, and the dates of that expansion are not very far apart. The Eastern or Greek Church is not to be ignored. It is not to be ignored to-day. Some day that Church will make itself felt in this country. And then she will not allow her claims to be dealt with as they are dealt with to-day.

Now what part of the Christian Church in the Bible was Roman? What part of the Christian Church lay west of this imaginary line that I have

drawn from north to south through the middle of Europe? The Church was established before the Bible was written, and do you tell me that that was the Roman Church, that first Church? No part of it was Roman that I know of except the Christians, or the Church, that was at Rome. Every other Church almost that I can think of, that is mentioned in the Bible, was east of this north-and-south line, and was consequently the Greek Church, or the Eastern Church. All the writers of the New Testament lived east of this line, and wrote Greek. All the seven Churches mentioned in the Apocalypse lay east of this line, and were Greek. All the Christians to whom St. Paul wrote his Epistles were east of this line, except the Romans. The Roman Church has a translation of the original Scriptures, just as we have, only theirs is a Latin translation, and ours is English. The Greek was the original language, and the Greek Church was the original Church. The Greek Church, to my mind, was the greatest Church for a thousand years. All the Ecumenical Councils for the first thousand years were held within Greek territory, and used the Greek language. The language of the universal creeds was Greek.

The first great division of the Church took place in about the year 1000, and then it divided

according to the line that I have drawn through Europe from north to south. It divided principally according to language. The Church east of that line was called the Eastern or Greek Church, and the Church west of that line was called the Western or Latin Church, and those names obtain largely to this day. All the three Churches were in communion up to this time—the Greek, the Roman, and the English. The Roman and the English were in communion five hundred years longer, when, in 1571, the Roman Church withdrew from the Church of England by a papal bull. There is no guess-work about this; we have the documents, and the dates. There is no such thing as the separation of the Church of England from the Church of Rome. It was the other way. The only way you can overthrow these facts of history based on public records and documentary evidence and papal bulls, would be by infallibility.

Talk not to me about the Roman Church and ignore the Greek, the earliest Church, and the greatest Church of many centuries.

THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you, and peace, from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ (Romans i:7).



Y subject to-night is what you generally call the Catholic Church, but which is better called the Roman Church; better yet, the Italian Church — and our duty to it. I desire to present a view of this Church which people generally do not seem to see. The greatest objection that we have to the Roman Catholic Church is that it is not Catholic, and that it holds many doctrines that are not Catholic. In other words, it is not a universal Church holding universal doctrines. Catholic means universal, and it does not mean anything else. While I say this, I say it with all charity to its members. But charity to its members must not blind us to the truth. There was a time when all the Christians in the world were in one Church. Then the Church was Catholic. It was universal, and it held Catholic, or universal doctrines. This obtained through the first few centuries. At that

time the Pope of Rome was simply the Bishop of Rome, nothing more, nothing less; and that is all he of right is to-day, simply the Bishop of Rome. Now if we lived in Rome we might have some duty to the Bishop of Rome, perhaps. But living in America, it is different. We have Bishops here whose rank is equal to that of the Bishop of Rome. According to the Bible and Catholic principles, the Bishop of Rome could have no jurisdiction over Catholic Bishops here, any more than a Catholic Bishop here in America could have jurisdiction over the Bishop of Rome. St. Peter never claimed jurisdiction over St. John at Ephesus, or St. James at Jerusalem. Nor did St. James of Jerusalem claim jurisdiction over St. John at Ephesus, or any other Apostle. The only theory upon which the Roman Catholic Church can stand is the development theory. Their Church developed, and their doctrines developed. I understand they hold that theory. I hold that the Roman Church all over the world is an Italian Church, because it is completely ruled, dominated, and controlled by the Italian Cardinals, and as long as it is, that Church ought to be confined to Italy.

I desire to call the attention of Americans and Northern Europeans, and all members of the great white race, as to where their duty lies, and where

their salvation lies, and that it does not lie with the dark race of southern Europe; it does not lie with the Italians. I speak with all due respect to the races, white or black or dark. Neither do I think that the salvation of the dark race of southern Europe lies with the white race of the North. But I say this, that Roman Catholics all over the world have given over their religious liberties, the ruling power in their religion and the dictation of the mode of their salvation, to Italians. We have just an opposite example in this city of the actual state of affairs. We have Italians here, and we have the northern white race here in the Roman Church. The northern white race is the dominant ruling element. But all these are ruled and dominated by the Italians in Italy. Why not be dominated and ruled by the Italians in Durango? Why not turn over to them the dictation of the mode of your salvation? Why not turn over to them the custody of your faith? That is exactly parallel to what is being done by the Church at large.

For the first thousand years the Church was one. Then the Church split in two: into Eastern and Western; into Greek and Roman. The Eastern Church did not think the Western or Roman Church did right. Then, in the year 1500, northern Europe broke from the Roman

Church largely. Remember, those people who broke away were largely in communion with the Church of Rome. If the Roman Church blames anybody it must blame its own members. The Reformation was a revolution in the Church, and a revolt. The northern race could not stand the dictation of the Italians in religious affairs. They had been tried in the balance and found wanting, and they have been found wanting in almost every other element of civilization and advancement, as well as in religion. They have been found wanting in the administration of the Church, and they have been found wanting in the administration of the state, until the Pope is a confessed prisoner in the Vatican, as I understand it.

The Pope claimed universal temporal power, and once swayed kings and emperors; and he still claims it. But that power has been reduced until even Italy herself has repudiated it, and he sits from his window in Rome and beholds a supreme temporal power that is not his own. And he sees three-fourths of the Christian world turned against him. He claims universal jurisdiction over the Christian world, when three-fourths of it has repudiated him. A pitiable spectacle! Now I ask, What is the duty of the great white race? Is it to turn the custody of their faith over to an alien race and an alien state, an alien Church? A state

which has failed as a first-class power, and a race which has failed in civilizing influences, and a Church that has failed in its boastful pretensions of supreme power, temporal and religious? It is the duty of the great white race to be in their own Church which God has given them, and which has borne the best fruit of the ages, to have a share in the custody of their own religion, and not to give it over to aliens and foreigners. It is our duty to cast our lot with the first-class powers of the world wherein God placed us, and not with decaying secondary powers. Why should Italians rule the Christian world and dictate to it? Does it not seem preposterous? Is there anything in the race that indicates that they should? They are the poorest race in Europe. Is there anything in their language that they should? The Latin language is not the language that people understand to-day, even in Italy. Why, then, should it be used in worship? Is there anything in the education of the Italians that they should rule over us in religion? Nobody goes to Italy for an education, not to modern Italy, and it is modern Italy which rules, you say. The Pope claims universal jurisdiction over the Christian world, and you allow it and help it on. Yes, and the Pope claims universal jurisdiction over the temporal world, and why do you not allow that and help that

on? But you do not. You do not permit it. You say he is mistaken about that. Very well, then if he is mistaken in this jurisdiction, may he not be mistaken in the other also?

God never intended that we should be ruled over in any respect by the Italians, or by Italy. There is no reasonable indication of it on God's footstool. Save your children from such a calamity.

BE COURTEOUS

Be Courteous (I. Pet. iii: 8).



HAT is, be a gentleman. Be a lady. Education and culture are of the highest importance. They are not to be contrasted. They should go together. We think a great deal of education; but we do not think or talk so much of culture, that advancement and refinement of the mind so essential in the quality of every lady and gentleman. We spend time and means and money on an education; but we do not often spend much on culture. Is culture not practical enough for this age? It could be utilized in society and in social circles to tremendous advantage, and the business world now is demanding men of culture, as well as men of education, to fill stations in life. We do not want boors or snobs and snubbers anywhere. We want men who know how to be gentlemen, and who will act up to that knowledge.

However much the family, the state, and the Church may do for education, they certainly do not

do much nowadays for culture. What a great advantage it would be to the boys themselves, and to the families, and to our country, if the boys could receive some culture of manner and speech and action, and be guided by the right. I am in no mood to advocate a return to a titled nobility, or aristocracy. But I imagine children from such families were well cultured boys and girls, at one time, at least. And I wish we could have retained that old culture without the modern snob. We sometimes hear the expression: "A gentleman of the old school." That means a great deal. I am afraid the gentleman of the "new school" is not much of an improvement. It would be well if parents would see to the culture of their children, as well as to their education. The best school of culture is the family. Some are naturally cultivated boys and girls. They sometimes grow up ladies and gentlemen under the most adverse surroundings. But culture should never be neglected. It can overcome much natural perversity, and conquer many an opposing force. But the Church is an institution of culture as well as of learning and religion, and in seeking the Kingdom of God you will find a culture.

Now you will probably tell me that we should seek the Kingdom of God for another purpose, viz., salvation. That is true. You are right. But

when you talk of joining a church you often say: "Well, I joined such and such a church because I felt at home there." If you do, then I can say that I will go into a certain church because there is culture there. Now I wish to make a statement. If I am too modest to make it, nobody else will. I hope, therefore, that you will permit me to make it. It is this: *There is more culture in this Church than in any other Church in the world.* Everybody does not know this. Many know it, and won't tell. I say this because I want you to take advantage of it, and I want your children to take advantage of it. Especially do I want the members of this Church to appreciate this and every other good feature of the Church, and speak of it to their friends and neighbors, and not to cast away pearls for something cheaper. Here is where you can make gentlemen of your boys, and ladies of your girls. You want a book of etiquette for your boys and girls. The best book of etiquette that I know of is the Bible, together with the Apocrypha. I do not know whether I have convinced you upon this point or not. But I am going to convince you of something before I get through, and on this line of culture which is a refinement of the mind, valuable to any man or woman; valuable to the Church and state and family. There is culture in literature. There is good

literature, and poor literature. These two classes exist, not because the moral in one is good and in the other it is bad, but because the language in one is good and of the best, while in the other it is bad. A good moral sermon, therefore, may be very poor literature. The best class of literature in this sense is called standard literature.

Now then, please permit me to say this, which none of you will deny, and which none successfully can deny: that this Church has the greatest standard religious literature in the world, and it is contained in two books—the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. I claim the English Bible, because it was translated by this Church, and transmitted to the world by this Church, and the Prayer Book is the development of centuries in the Church as a companion to the Bible. They both stand unequalled in religious literature. There is not a translation of the Bible on earth that equals in standard literature the English Bible. Not the Latin, not the Greek, not the Russian, not the German, not the Scandinavian. None equals the English for standard literature. There is no better literature in the English language than Shakespeare and the Bible. They stand at the head, and they cannot be improved upon. There is no Prayer Book, no service book, no ritual in the world, whether among lodges or churches or re-

ligious societies, that can equal the literature of the Book of Common Prayer. It stands above everything of its kind on earth, and so does the English Bible.

It may seem a very strange thing to people that the Prayer Book cannot be improved upon in this respect, but it is nevertheless a fact. In respect to its literature, this Church stands the highest of any Church in the world. It is the best equipped for culture. For the most beautiful services we must go to the Episcopal Church. Is it any wonder, then, that the world so often speaks of the most beautiful services of the Episcopal Church? And it must be a satisfaction to us to know that they are, by far and beyond compare, the most beautiful services in the world. And why should we not have the most beautiful services in the world? If we have them not, we ought to get them and possess them. We have a right to the best, and God wants us to have the best. Now I think it is due you, due the members of this Church, that I should thus pass my judgment upon this matter.

PEOPLE MAY HOLD THEIR BELIEFS, BUT MUST NOT DIVIDE

That they may be one (St. John xvii:11).



HIS is the prayer of Jesus: that His disciples may be one. What Jesus prayed for, we should pray for. We should pray that we all may be one, that there may be unity among us; that there may be one fold and one shepherd. This prayer is also in accordance with the conclusions of science; it was not many years go, but it is to-day. Science has advanced so far that it now agrees with Christianity. This is a wondrous thing to tell of itself. A wondrous confirmation of our faith from a source which was once considered hostile, and which by some is so considered still. But do we pray that prayer of Jesus? That beautiful prayer for unity among His disciples? Do we pray that prayer enough? Or do we pray it at all? Do we not even try to do the very opposite sometimes? Do we not even go so far as to try to make a division among the disciples? Do we try to hold the disciples together, or do we try to pull them

apart? In what direction do our desires and our prayers go? I have the greatest desire for one grand, broad, Catholic unity, a unity that should be universal; a unity that would show the universal brotherhood, a universal love; and to that end I labor and toil. If we are to have that universal brotherhood we must build it upon that universal Man, Christ Jesus. He founded that universal brotherhood. But man has sought and succeeded in narrowing it.

Now, in what direction are we working? Are we seeking and working and praying to keep the disciples together in one grand brotherhood, or are our efforts indifferent, or are they for dividing the disciples? I do not care how poor or frail or humble the mortal, I do not want to see even the least or the poorest separated from the unity of the discipleship. That would be frustrating the very object of our Lord's Prayer. There is truth in every Church. But there is no reason why we should leave the unity of this great brotherhood, and run after that truth. You may have, and you do have, that truth in this universal brotherhood. You may have all the truth of Christianity here. You may hold all the truth of Christianity here. Because for centuries all the Christians were embraced within the fold of this Church, and we must look upon this Church as

the ground from which all came, or from which all divided. Now you think that I blame all who separated from the brotherhood, or divided. Yes, I do. Be the cause ever so good, the act itself is in direct opposition to the desires and prayers of Christ. But, I do not blame them alone. I blame the Church also from which they divided, because those who remained in the Church may have provoked the division, or even caused it. I therefore do not take sides in this matter. I do not blame one party and uphold the other. But I deplore the divisions which are contrary both to Christianity and science; contrary to the spirit of the age; contrary to the spirit of philanthropists and the wisest statesmen who labor for peace and unity, and do not delight in war.

But here is a fact in this great problem that people generally do not seem to know. When people reach out for other churches, they do it, apparently, to find some new truth that they did not find in the church where they were. Or they do it to emphasize some neglected truth in the church where they were. But the step is wrong, because it is against the prayers of Jesus. The same thing can be accomplished in another way. And it is being accomplished in another way all the time. That is, it is and can be accomplished without division or separation of the brethren.

And that this can be done inside the Church was shown by the Methodists when they started, not as a church, but as a society inside of the Church of England. It was not for years and years, and not until their great founder, John Wesley, was dead, that this Methodist society separated from the Church of England, or organized into a church of their own. But John Wesley himself never left the Church of England, and pleaded with his followers not to leave it, and they should not have left the Church of England. There was no need of their leaving it. There was a reason for the organization of the Methodist society in the Church of England. The religious life in the Church of England had grown cold and careless, and some organized under Wesley for a more earnest and sincere Christian life and religious fervor; and there was no reason why they should separate from the Church. John Wesley thought exactly the same as I do, and he ought to know better than any one else in the world. He was a minister and presbyter in the Church of England, which is the same Church as this, as long as he lived, and never wanted to leave it. That is the way every Methodist minister should be. They ought not to go back on their great founder. We now have that same religious fervor in the Church that the Methodists strove for and started. There

is no reason for the division. We need the Methodists, and the Methodists need us, to make a broader and more universal Church than either is now. And so I might go on with almost every modern division.

Take the Christian Scientists, for instance. They found in the Church a coldness, as the original Methodists did, but on other lines. They found a coldness and doubt about the faith in healing the sick. As is almost always the case, their leaders were not wholly right as to what the Church did believe and practise. But they were at least partly right, that there was a coldness and lack of faith in the Church on the part of those, too, who ought to know and do better. I do not blame the Christian Scientists for their faith in healing. Nor do I blame Dowie for his faith in healing. But I blame anybody who separates from his brethren. I blame anybody who has a hand in creating or making a division. Because that is plain; that is against the prayers and wishes of Jesus. Whatever else is right, that is wrong. But this is a tremendous question. There is one thing certain. God permits these divisions, and it must be for some ultimate good, some of which I think I can see. But divisions and separations are not the highest. In themselves they are an evil, contrary to science; contrary to true

religion; contrary to great hearts in the world; contrary to the prayers and wishes of Jesus; contrary to God's ultimate will. Divisions must go and unity must come.

Whatever else may be error, that is the truth.

HOW SHALL I PRAY?

Lord, teach us to pray . . . And He said unto them, When ye pray, say, Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy name, Thy Kingdom come, Thy will be done, as in heaven, so in earth (St. Luke xi: 1, 2).



WHEN I went away from home, I went away with my mother's prayers, my mother's Bible, and my mother's religion. Yes, and my mother's Church, the one she had adopted, after coming to America. I learned to pray at my mother's knee, as we all did, I hope. I learned the Lord's Prayer so long ago that I do not remember the time. It was of my older sister that I learned that beautiful child's prayer in verse:

"Now I lay me down to sleep,
I pray the Lord my soul to keep."

While most of the prayers I used were printed or committed to memory, I was never told that one kind of prayer was better than another, or that one way of praying was more acceptable to God than another way, provided I was reverent and

had my thoughts on what I said. While my prayers were largely out of a book, I was never taught that extempore prayer was no good. While I have learned much since I left home, I have not been able to improve upon my ideas of prayer in this respect. All prayers were allowed me then. None were excluded from my use, formal or informal, printed or committed, extempore or written. My ideas were as broad and free as the blue expanse above. I could read my prayer, or say my prayer, or sing my prayer, or pray my prayer, or preach my prayer, and God would receive it. I could breathe my prayer, or think my prayer, and God would receive it. Oh, blessed liberty and blessed light. Think that I should have to go away from home to find it otherwise, to find a world narrower than my home!

When I went out into the world I found I was too broad for many people. I was told by Christian people that many of my prayers were no prayers at all. And to "say" my prayers was no praying. I was upset and unsettled, and confused and confounded. Yet I hoped that God was broad enough to take me in, also. I believed that He had received my prayers from the time I lisped them from my mother's knee. I have studied the Bible diligently, and yet I have never found it necessary by that to narrow my early

training. The Bible never said anything against my modes of prayer, or any forms of prayer. The Christian churches have a wonderful opportunity to be broad and liberal, but they do not seem to grasp it. As their fathers thought, so think they down in the ruts, and they do not seem able to get out, narrow as the old Puritans. I have continued my breadth of thought, always believing that God will receive prayers though man will not receive them, that He receives all prayers, provided a man is honest and conscientious who prays. A prayer does not have to be prescribed by man or a church in order to be acceptable to God. A prayer does not have to be acceptable to a preacher, or to a church, in order to be acceptable to God. God is always more liberal than man. I do not preach against any kind of prayer. As long as it is a prayer, let it ascend to the throne, and do its work and have its influence.

I had not been away from home long before I found that the good Christian people around me tried to curtail my privileges and my liberty. They told me I must not "say" my prayers. To "say" my prayers was not praying. That was the first time I had heard that. Perhaps they were right and I was wrong. But I would see about that. My early training was attacked. I took

down my Bible, and I found what Jesus had to say. I would abide by whatever He said. And I found St. Luke xi: 2, where Jesus says: When ye pray, "say" "Our Father, which art in heaven," etc. I am right! When I pray I "say" my prayers. The preachers are wrong who say that I must not "say" my prayers. Jesus tells me to *say*, and I will *say*! But, then, some people have always got to preach against something anyway; even against the Bible. I teach the children of the Church to *say* the Lord's Prayer and other prayers. And I am not ashamed to teach them to say their prayers, because Christ used that same expression, that same word. And I do not want to discourage the children in any kind of prayer. Let them use that which seems to them easiest and best. The great thing after all is to pray, if they will only pray. But we had a preacher from Denver who should teach the children how to pray. The disciples asked our Lord, "Teach us to pray." And our Lord answered, When ye pray "say," and the preacher from Denver says: When ye pray do *not* say. Now that is the difference between our Lord and Denver. I waited patiently and breathlessly for the Denver minister to tell the children *how* they should pray if they should not say their prayers, but he never told them. Such teaching as that will drive away a

boy or girl from praying altogether. What difference does it make in what way a man prays, if he only prays? The fact that a man prays, that is the all-important thing, not how he prays. The fact of the matter is, the Bible lays down no rule for prayer except this one: "When ye pray, say." And, strange as it may seem, this solitary rule for prayer laid down in the Bible is the one that preachers deny and attack, and the only one they deny. That is just like preachers. If an angel should come down from heaven and tell you that to *say prayers* was not praying, tell him he is wrong, and prove it by the word of God.

This shallow, ignorant way of treating the word of God does more to drive children from praying, from the Bible and the Church, than it is possible to compute. Do not hesitate to say, do not be ashamed to say, that you say your prayers. Christ used that same expression, and now I ask why do not all Christians use that same expression? Be brave and hold to what you believe, and what your mother taught you in the way of prayer.

Close the door of your room, seek the humble chapel or cloistered cathedral, or go forth into the highway at noon, or into the solitudes of night; and there or anywhere, put forth a lofty desire of the soul, or a noble wish, or a petition or re-

quest to the throne of grace, breathed or spoken or said, uttered or unexpressed, and heaven itself is as open to them as the open canopy of the sky.

THE LORD IS GOD NEAR AND AFAR OFF

The nobleman saith unto Him, Sir, come down ere my child die. Jesus saith unto him, Go thy way; thy son liveth. And the man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way (St. John iv: 49, 50).



HE conversion of this nobleman is remarkable, because he is the first person of that rank and station who stands upon record as believing Christ. He seems to have been an official of great authority. From such, our Saviour generally found not only neglect, but even aversion. And from the records we have reason to suspect that this nobleman was once no better disposed. For when, as a last resort, he sought the Lord's assistance, the answer plainly reproves a faith weak and slow and scrupulous. Jesus told the nobleman that no evidence of doctrines, no credible testimony, nor anything less than miraculous power, brought home to his own senses and his own benefit would convince him. And yet to this

infirmity our Lord graciously condescended. And on that account I am led to believe that He condescends to our infirmities to-day.

Now let us see what brought this nobleman to Christ. He did not care anything for Him—he cared for his child. He was not anxious to know if He were really the promised Messiah. It never entered his mind to become His disciple. Yet he comes because trouble had entered his home; because riches and grandeur had no power to stem the progress of disease and death. The doctors can do nothing. The father fears the death of his son. He hears that Jesus has returned to Galilee, and, no doubt, besides the news of His return, reports of His wonderful works. The nobleman goes to Him, not because, like the poor, despised Samaritan, he believes Him to be “the Christ, the Saviour of the world,” but because he thinks of Him as a wonderful Healer, one who may be able to save his child. So the nobleman’s trouble brings him to Christ. Now, my friends, if we have not gone to Christ at any other time, let us go to Him in trouble. If we have not gone to Him because He is the Christ, let us go to Him because He can help us. Let us go to Him, anyhow; and we shall soon learn that He is just the one we need in this world. Trials and dangers frequently teach faith. If we lay not up treasures

in heaven we will lose everything, because we can only have a life-lease on the things of this world; a life-lease, that is all. The saving of one single soul is worth living for, is worth more than all the world. A cup of cold water given in the name of Jesus to one who is thirsty, is worth an eternal reward. Christ spoke of no other rewards.

Suppose you owned all the world, you could only hold it by a life-lease which may end to-morrow, which must end in a few fleeting years. But treasures laid up in heaven are yours forever. The smallest in eternity is greater than the greatest in time.

Let us see how the Lord treats this nobleman. Then we may learn how He deals with the world to-day. His dealing with this nobleman deserves the more notice because so very different from His dealing with an inhabitant of the same city, a dependent upon the same court, and in a case very similar. When a centurion whose servant lay sick at Capernaum, too, asked His help, the message met with this encouraging reply, "I will come and heal him." Accordingly, without the least delay, our Lord was on His way; but was stopped by this most noble yet humble declaration of his faith: Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst come under my roof, but speak the word only and my servant shall be healed." Now here is a noble-

man, a person of much higher rank, entreating Him earnestly to come and heal his son; a relation much dearer, as the officer was much superior. And yet we find nothing like the same readiness in complying with this request. I point out this to show that our Lord did what was right and proper in either case.

That centurion was duly sensible both of our Lord's power, and of his own unworthiness. To Him therefore the kindest advances were made. Just so to-day our Lord is ever ready to help the humble. The centurion commanded a hundred men; he was a captain, as we would say, not so high in office, not so high in pride as the nobleman. But this nobleman here seems rather to look for attention and respect. He seems to have thought that nothing less than our Lord's own presence could do any service. Nay, even this, that if He did not come quickly, He would come too late. "Sir, come down ere my child die."

He was to be treated differently than the centurion. To be taught that the Messiah is no respecter of persons; that the outward state and dignity are of no importance with Him, but the inward state and virtue of the man. To be convinced that God is a God afar off as well as near at hand, and that one single word should be as effectual as a touch, or an application. This our

Lord showed by His not complying with the first entreaty, and by not going down to the house.

When all went well with the nobleman, he did not feel his need of Christ. But when trouble came, he found there was no one but Christ who could help him. It is just the same now, when God sends us trouble. We must not decide hastily that it is a punishment, or as sent in anger; on the contrary, it is sent in love to bring us closer to Him whom we are so apt to forget when all goes well.

The stars are in the heavens always, but we cannot see them when the sun is shining. Just so Christ's love can be best seen when the world seems dark. Christ answered the prayers of this nobleman with all his imperfections. May not we be encouraged to lay our troubles and sorrows at the feet of Jesus? He says to all of us, "Come unto Me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

THE RESURRECTION



ETAPHYSICIANS divide the universe into two parts, the *ego*, and the *non ego*; the I, and the not I. From these two fields of investigation we derive truth. We often divide and differ as we draw exclusively from one or the other of these fields. The truth is, we should draw the proper truth from each. This is necessary for all broad, complete, well balanced minds.

In this connection it might be well for us to consider what these flowers, this celebration, this Easter ceremony means. Is it simply a response to a laudable sentiment? Is it an outcome of faith sprung from an inner consciousness of an outward fact? Is this commemoration something that we have derived from an inner reason or intuition, from the *ego*? Nay! None of these. Sentiment is good only when built on deeper truth. Faith is valuable only when it has to do with fact. Reason is sound only when it can discriminate between faith and opinion, fact and fancy. This occasion, with all that accompanies

it, endeavors to set forth a fact which the Christian world holds. That fact is beautifully put in poetic language thus: "Christ is risen from the dead." For men of the West, strong in intellect and power, and but little given to sentiment and feeling, here is meat for reason and data for evidence. Business men who carefully discriminate between truth and falsehood; judges and lawyers who learn to sift and weigh evidence; physicians who arrive at facts through symptoms, to all I say, here is a fact purported to have taken place as material as ever you could wish in your daily life and practice. Either Christ rose from the dead, or He did not rise. That is the question. If you please, there is no sentiment about it, no feeling, nothing that you could arrive at from your inner consciousness or intuition.

Nothing is purported to have taken place but a cold fact. Just as any other material fact takes place, and is witnessed by men, and testified to and passes into history, and which we do not arrive at through any inner consciousness, faith or feeling. Now, how would you arrive at the knowledge of anything that you find in history? Surely you would not believe anything just because you read it in history. You discriminate between truth and falsehood, even in history. I surely do not tell you anything new when I tell

you that the truth is not always told in a volume stamped historical. You judge of the symptoms. You sift evidence and weigh probabilities. This is what we do when we try to see whether or not we can believe that Christ rose from the dead. We do not look into ourselves to see whether Christ rose or not—into our inner consciousness or feeling or belief. It is nowhere said that Christ rose there. But we look outside of us, because the fact is purported to have taken place in another age and country, and witnessed by other men. The question is, therefore, a matter of evidence. Call all the witnesses in favor of the resurrection—and they number more than five hundred—and they will all declare upon the witness stand that “Christ is risen.” Now call all the witnesses against the resurrection, including Roman officials and soldiers whose interest it was, as they thought, that He should not rise, and whose special duty it was to watch the lifeless form; and the best that they can testify is that they do not know, and seem reticent and desirous to hush the matter up. There is not a single witness against the resurrection. Not one. None to say, Here are His bones, He is not risen. And nobody ever pretends to disprove the resurrection in that way.

There are two ways in which a disproof is attempted: to invalidate the testimony of the

hundreds of those who saw Christ after He had risen; and to show that the resurrection is contrary to experience, and therefore not credible. A few words as to each of these attempts at disproof. The second I believe was Hume's celebrated objection to miracles—because they were contrary to experience. It was not contrary to the experience of Christ and His Apostles, and over five hundred brethren at once. How do we get at experience but by the testimony of just such men? No man is fool enough to think that he can experience all there is to experience himself. He must not conclude that what he cannot, or does not, experience is contrary to experience. In such a sense the rising of a balloon was once contrary to experience. If we believe in progress, as we all do, we must believe that we will go contrary to experience, or rather, have new and advanced experiences, and that really was what the resurrection was; a new, advanced experience.

But how is the testimony of the five hundred, and more, to be invalidated? Who would be the best witnesses of such a fact? Surely, His own relatives, and friends, and followers, who knew Him best and the facts of His death and burial; those very five hundred, the boldest of whom denied Him, the most devoted of whom forsook Him and fled at the very time in question, all

of whom doubted His ever rising again, all of whom finally believed after the most searching examination. As good an opportunity as the Romans had of rebutting the evidence, if they could, they have not a single witness; and as well as they would like to have had evidence of that kind, not only at that time, but later during their ten long persecutions of the Christians, but not a single voice.

But suppose, for the sake of argument, that those five hundred and more faithful brethren were mistaken, and on that account are not to be believed. What is there, then, that we can believe in history? What single fact is there in all the history of the world that is so faithfully and well testified to as the resurrection of Christ? Are there any acts of Caesar, Charlemagne, or Cromwell, or the most prominent men in the world, better substantiated by evidence than the resurrection? But you will say, they are reasonable, but this is not. Just one moment on this point. The more anything seems reasonable, the more credulous people are about it. They will then believe too soon. But take something that seems unreasonable, and as in the case of the apostles and brethren, some did not believe, and could not believe, and would not believe; but finally all believed with the greatest unanimity. What greater

certainly can one have of any historical fact? Now then, if you can tell me of a historic fact as well proven as the resurrection of Christ, I would like to have it pointed out to me.

If you can believe in the resurrection then you can and ought to become a Christian.

Now what do all these beautiful flowers mean besides? They stand for something of infinite value. They symbolize the new life in Christ. They are only an outward show of what we aim inwardly to be.

Here I think I see the greatest danger from formality: eagerness for outward show. I abominate rivalry in mere external display when our rivalry should be in the life, in the Christian virtues and in faithfulness to the Church of God, of which flowers are but beautiful emblems. Then, my friends, flowers in churches are one of two things: hollow shams of pride which will fade with the fading flower, or the natural effusion of souls which have been forgiven, the emblem of that life which has been ideal during a season of meditation and prayer. It is a well-spent Lent which makes the Easter joys assert themselves in the beauty of holiness.

THE REST THAT REMAINETH

For if Joshua had given them rest, then would He not afterward have spoken of another day.

There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God (Heb. iv: 8, 9).



THE Apostle speaks in the Epistle to the Hebrews of a rest that remaineth for the people of God, referring to the rest the Saviour gives, which is begun on earth and perfected in heaven. The way in which he speaks of it is very suggestive. The works, he says, were finished at the creation, when God rested at the end of the six days, and appointed the seventh as a day of rest. But that he says was not the true rest, for it was still future, and the Sabbath was only its type. Then Jesus, that is, Joshua, gave the Israelites rest in Canaan after their forty years wanderings; but neither was that true rest. It still remained in the future. Then a long time after that, David speaks in the Psalms of a rest that remaineth, yet in store, showing that the true rest had not been found in his day. And so age after age rolled

away, change after change took place, and still the rest was spoken of as a thing that remained for the people of God—not as already obtained. How descriptive this is of human life! Men seek rest; but they proceed from change to change to find that it is a thing that remains in the future; just as of old, believers found it was not in the Sabbath, nor in Canaan, nor in David's time.

Let us look at some of life's changes and conditions, and see how rest flits ever before us, but is not grasped. Childhood is generally associated in our minds with bright ideas. But little ones have their troubles, and probably as many and as hard to bear in proportion to their strength as those of older persons. The loss of a toy may be as much to a child as the loss of thousands to a man. Childhood is an immature state; if its cup is easily filled, it is also easily emptied. Hardly anyone would wish to be a child forever. This is not our rest—it remaineth. And much of youth is vanity; so it appears as we look back upon it from advanced years. We can recollect many of its vexations and follies. We formed many an ardent attachment, perhaps, that we remember with a smile. We laid the foundations of evil habits, perhaps, which we shall carry with us to the grave. We lost opportunities for good that we can never regain. Even the young are not

satisfied. The boy is fond of telling what he shall do when a man, and the young are wishing they were old enough to engage in business, and promising themselves what great things they will do then, and how happy they will be. Evidently they have not found the rest. It remaineth. And does middle age attain it? Then the man is only laying foundations for happiness—amassing property to be enjoyed afterwards; planting trees and laying out grounds for his future paradise. Ask him then if he has obtained rest. His reply will be, How can one be happy laboring like a slave for the support of a family, separated often from loved ones by necessary avocations, with little time for the care of children, or the culture of the mind, or for worship of God; and, besides this, having many a conflict, many a grudge and bitter feeling awakened among fellow-men by life's business and mistakes?

Or, ask the mother of a family, and her answer will be, I do not live, I do but exist. I have so many anxieties for my children, for their health, their happiness, their education and eternal welfare, that I find little rest or peace. But I am looking forward to the time when they shall be settled in the world, and then I hope to rest. So we travel on—the rest is not found yet. It remaineth. But old age, serene old age with its

silver-gray hairs of which some speak so poetically—does old age bring rest? Ask the old man, and his reply may be, When I was young I could enjoy many things which now give me no pleasure. With limbs enfeebled, capacity for business gone, a burden to myself and perhaps to others, with infirmities ever increasing, with marriage bell and funeral knell sounding pretty much alike in my ears, with a memory like a graveyard, full of the names of the dead, with loved ones departed, leaving me amid a generation of newcomers whom I care not to know, and who care less to know me—how can I be happy? The rest is still in the future, even for the aged. It ever remaineth.

And so it is with the conditions of life, as well as with its ages. I might go through with examples of all the changes and conditions of the human race, and the result would be the same, in prosperity and in adversity, in riches and in poverty, in sickness and in health—the rest not yet obtained, but laid up in store. There is a rest for those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth, and through His mercy and the confession of a true faith have become the children of God. But this rest will not be fully entered upon until we enter the heavenly land, though some portion and foretaste of it may

be, and is enjoyed, here on earth. It is the rest which is found in God's favor and blessing in a heart set on things above, more than on things of earth. Young and old, rich and poor, all, if they will, may share it amid life's manifold changes. I care not what a person has, or has not besides, whether youth, wealth, world-honor, or age, poverty, low estate, health or disease; if he has not found rest in God, he has not much. If he has God for his portion, he has enough, and can never be greatly miserable. I therefore call upon you, my brethren and friends, to seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all that ye seek so eagerly in this world shall be added unto you. -

There is a rest that remaineth yet in store for us. How true it is; do we not long for a rest? And is it not certain that a perfect rest is not to be found in this world? Let us so live that we may have the assurance that we shall enter into that rest.

This longing, and expectation, and hope of a rest that shall be enjoyed, is good for man. Let childhood look forward to the pleasures and satisfactions of youth and manhood. Let the young men and young women be ever so sanguine in their hopes and expectations of the future. It is all good, if rightly directed. I would not for a

moment have these desires and longings changed. No. They are heaven-born gifts of God to man, which are to carry us easily on from earth to heaven, from time to eternity. We all must be convinced that we can enjoy, and would wish to enjoy, more than this world can give. We must know that this is not our resting place, or permanent abode.

Time sweeps us on with an irresistible force. I would not for the world, nor could I if I would, have this joyful anticipation of future rest and pleasure taken away from the various states and conditions of the human race. On the contrary, I would have it extended to all conditions of men; so that, whatever befell them in this world, whether sorrow, sickness, pain, poverty or death, they would ever look forward to that heavenly home, that eternal resting place which Jesus has gone to prepare. I would that the old would look forward as well as the young, and never look back with the brooding thoughts of disaffection; but take up the motto of St. Paul and say, "I count not myself to have apprehended; but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

And surely St. Paul had a life to look back

upon with regret, if any of us have. Think of his life before his journey to Damascus, and think of his life afterwards. But he does not look back. My brethren and friends, if we suffer loss, pain or disappointment in this world, let us look beyond the things of earth and sense for true happiness and true riches, which will surely come if there be truth in the Bible, if there be a loving God and Father. Let us not run the risk of losing that heavenly rest which Christ hath prepared for those that love Him. Let us lay hold of all the means of grace that God has given us, in public and private prayer and praise; in the sacraments and services of the Church, in faith in God's favor and goodness, in hope of eternal joy, in love to God and man.

THE PATRIARCHAL CHURCH



THE Church to which we belong is that which the Almighty founded when He called Abraham and established His covenant with him. The Old Testament Church of God was established with Abraham. There were, however, promises of the Kingdom as early as the first Book of the Bible, that "the seed of the woman should bruise the serpent's head." But the Church, God's Kingdom upon earth, was not established until the days of Abraham. From that time to this God has had His Church, His Kingdom, in the world. At first that Church was Patriarchal, i.e., the Patriarch, or father of the nation, was the head of the kingdom, which was both Church and State. Then it became the Kingdom of Israel, and then of Judah, when the head of the Church was hereditary in the house of Aaron, and the subordinate ministers were of the house of Levi. No part of the Bible was written except by a member of this Church, or this Kingdom. The Bible was written by members of the Church of God, or members

of His Kingdom. There is no doubt that that is one reason for the establishment of His Church; that the members of it, i.e., some of them, might be qualified to write the word of God. That is one reason why we know we have the true word of God, that it was produced by God's Church, God's Kingdom.

When Christ came, the old dispensation ended, but God's Kingdom did not end. Christ built His Church, His Kingdom, directly upon the old Kingdom. His Church was nothing more or less than the fulfilment of the old, a continuation of the old. It was all promised in the old.

Moses was the first writer of the Old Testament. And he did not live till after the time of Abraham. He was in the old Church established by God with Abraham when he wrote. And so were all the Old Testament writers. If you wish to remember when Moses crossed the Red Sea to the Promised Land, remember it was in the year 1492 B. C., as it is in the same year after Christ, A. D. 1492, that Columbus crossed the sea to this Promised Land.

No one wrote the New Testament till Christ had established His Church, His Kingdom here. No one was authorized or prepared to write it before. The Church always comes before the Bible, the institution before the Book. The Chris-

tian Church was established in the year of our Lord 33, but not a word of the New Testament was written until several years after that. And the New Testament writers did not finish till the year of our Lord 100. All the writers of the New Testament were members of the Church of God. It is the very same, identical, Church which has come down to us here, and of which we are members. The Church and the Bible have come down the ages together—the one witnessing to the other; the Bible bearing a continuous testimony to the Church, and the Church bearing a continuous testimony to the scriptures, and both testifying to the truth of a Christian life. We belong to that Kingdom, and the Bible belongs to that Kingdom. Many are throwing the Kingdom away, and are clinging to the Book. We hold to both. God gave us both. They are two talents given us. We do not propose to throw one away or to hide it in a napkin, and be cast out. Let us see that we are in God's Kingdom, the one He organized upon earth, and in the Church that He established.

THE EARLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH



IF you remember a date in the early Christian Church, remember the year 325, A. D. At that time a great change took place. Before that time, the religion of the Roman Empire was heathen, and Christianity was an unpopular and persecuted religion. Of course there was no Pope of Rome during those 325 years, only the Bishop of Rome. Now there was a tremendous change. The Emperor Constantine had been converted to Christianity. Then the heathen religion was turned out as the religion of the Empire, and the Christian religion was adopted in its stead, a mighty change — the first union of Church and State. Constantine built Constantinople in the East. It became a rival of Rome, and its Bishop was considered equal in rank with the Bishop of Rome. There was no superiority of Rome at this time, nor for a long time to come. The Roman Empire included the world. There were naturally two divisions: the West, which spoke Latin, with its headquarters at Rome, and the East, which spoke

Greek, with its headquarters at Constantinople. In the year 395, the Emperor had two sons. He divided the Empire between them; Arcadius got the West, and Honorius the East. That created something of a rivalry between Rome and Constantinople. This division of the Empire into East and West finally resulted in the division of the Church into East and West. This first great division of the Church is variously dated from the year 800, to the year 1054. But I believe the year 1054 is generally put down as the date, as that was the time of the final break. Before that time there had been repeated attempts to heal the schism. The great schism, or split, between the East and West began in the ninth century. The history of the Church before the time of this great division, is very important. During this period were held the six great Ecumenical councils, the first of which was held in 325, and the last in 680. And the questions decided at these councils are, I believe, generally accepted by all Churches, Greek, Roman and Protestant. This is not very generally known. The division of the Empire led to the division of the Church, and the difference of language also undoubtedly had something to do with it. But still this might be well to remember: that the Church was one for a thousand years. The Roman or Western Empire fell in the year

476. The Eastern Empire stood a thousand years longer. Northern Europe, called barbarian, overthrew the Western Empire. The great scholars in the Church were in the Eastern Empire—not in the West. They spoke Greek—not Latin. They were from places like Alexandria in Egypt, Constantinople, Antioch and Ephesus — not from Rome. All the Ecumenical councils were held in the Eastern Empire. Not one was held in the Western or Latin Church for a thousand years, and no pope ever presided at an Ecumenical council of the undivided Church, and was hardly ever present. Three of these General Councils were held at Constantinople. The Eastern Church was much more prominent in the discussions of the questions of the day than the Western. The language, no doubt, had much to do with that, as the Greek is much better adapted to the exact statement of difficult questions than the Latin. The Latin is a poor language for the purpose, inexact and lacking the definiteness of the Greek. The Greek and Latin Churches occupy much the same territory in Europe to-day as they did then. Draw a line north and south west of Greece, and it will divide the Greek and Latin Church to-day.

THE CHURCH OF THE LIVING GOD

All the Athenians, and strangers which were there, spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell or to hear some new thing (Acts xvii: 21).



HOSE Athenians were very much like the people in these United States. They were very much like the people in Meeker. They, too, are very anxious to hear some new thing. This applies to preachers and Churches. In one respect, at least, this is a very laudable act; and in other respects it is not laudable. It is laudable, speaking of Churches and ministers, to go and hear something new if one is not quite satisfied with the old. The old may be error, and the new may be the truth. But to hear some new thing for the sake of variety, or for a pleasurable diversion, as we would go to an opera or to a theater, is not a good thing for a Churchman who is firmly grounded in God's own appointed ways. But some people seem never to be able to learn the truth and the right. St. Paul describes them as ever learning, and never coming to a knowledge of the truth.

Such people, whenever a new man comes along, a new preacher, or a new Church, are ever ready to hear some new thing. Now if people go with the idea that they may find a better Church, or one they like better, or one which they may think is more in accordance with the truth; or perhaps, a man they might like better, I wish to have a word to say in regard to this. So far as the man or minister is concerned, no matter how good or how sincere he may be, it is not the man that we want. He can not save us by his goodness; but it is the Church of the Living God that we want. We need to become members of the Kingdom of Heaven here on earth. We want to find the Church to love that Christ loved. We want to give ourselves for the Church that He gave Himself for.

Now that is the question for you and for me, and for everyone to consider. Instead of asking the question, What church shall I join? ask the question, Where is the Kingdom of Heaven, that I may enter it? Where is the Church of the Living God? Where is the Pillar and ground of the truth? I want to enter that. Where is the Church that Christ loved? I want to join that, and love it, too. Where is the Church that Christ gave Himself for? That shall be my Church, and I want to give myself for it, too. Such is the lan-

guage I love to hear. And we must hear it if we are to hear the highest truth. Now I believe we have found that Church. I believe that, by being members of this Church, we are members of the Kingdom. I believe we are members of the Kingdom of heaven now. I believe this Church is the Church of the Living God. I believe it is the pillar and ground of the truth. I believe we love this Church in a way that no one else can love another Church which they call their own. This is a truth that has been generally remarked by people of all denominations. I believe this is possible, only because it is with the same love that Christ had for the Church. Nobody loves his Church as much as a member of this Church loves his. Though our love may often be poor, yet it is the highest kind of love.

Some seem to think that we can love the Church too much, and we have been accused of it often. They say we place it above the Bible, and above Christ. We find no such warning in the word of God that we can love the Church too much. Christ said He loved the Church, even so much that He gave Himself for it. There is no danger that we, poor, frail mortals, will love the Church more than Christ did, or even as much. And if we should love it with all our heart, mind, soul and strength, would we not love Christ even

more? No, there is no danger of loving too much; the danger is the other way. We love too little. We love the Church too little, even we Churchmen and Churchwomen, who are accused of loving it too much. But many do love the Church and give themselves for it. It takes a great deal of love for that; it takes the greatest love, though it is often done in a poor way; yet many of us give ourselves for the Church, give our efforts, give our life, give our best. But in order to love the Church and give ourselves for it, we must have a high ideal of the Church. We could not love any Church so. Any Church will not do. Those who think that one Church is just as good as another, will never love the Church, and give themselves for it. In order to do that, you must find the Church of the Living God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Now the question is how to find that Church. One who comes to you and tells you, no matter how great a preacher, or how good and sincere he may be—one who tells you that his church is just as good as any, that one church is just as good as another, generally has a very poor article to offer. He would not say that if he loved the Church and gave himself for it, and you will not find any such language. If a man has a good horse, say the best in the world, that man will

not say that one horse is just as good as another. But if a man has a poor house, say about the poorest breed that goes, he will be most apt to say one horse is just as good as another. Amid all this confusion, of multiplicity of Churches and denominations, I wish you to consider one thing, one test which is a test, perhaps the test of the Church of the Living God. And we certainly do not want to be bothered with any other. And that test may be described by one word, Catholicity. That is the only single word that can describe it, unless it is Universality, and that does not describe it so well. Catholicity is the test of the word of God. Anything is Catholic in the Church which has never been out of existence in the Church. We have a warrant from Holy Scripture that the Church shall be, and must be, Catholic, from texts like this: The gates of hell shall not prevail against the Church. That is as much as to say that nothing that is essential to the Church shall ever die, or go out of existence.

And must not this be true, also, from what Christ says in another place: I will send you the Holy Ghost, and He shall lead you into all truth. Do you suppose, therefore, or do you think it possible, that a single essential in the Church was ever out of existence, or out of use or practice? And do you not suppose that all things necessary

to the Church came into existence at once? So we reason, and so all intelligent and thoughtful people will reason, it seems to me; and yet it is not at all as most Christians and churches reason. They leave out entirely this mode of arriving at the truth. Everything that has existed in the Church of God from the beginning, and never gone out of use, that is Catholic. Is it not reasonable to suppose that is the truth, the nearest to the truth? If God wants anything as a part, or order, or essential, in His Church He will not let it die or go out of existence or out of practice. Therefore we reason thus. We do not take the Bible alone. It is nonsense to talk about taking the Bible alone for our guide. The Almighty has other ways of guiding us. What are we going to do with science? Are we not going to be guided by science and our own reason, and by what we see in nature and learn therefrom? Those are very narrow who say we should be guided by the Bible alone.

This rule of catholicity can be applied to the Church as a whole, or to any part of it. If we should trace the history of this Church back to a time later than that of Jesus and the Apostles, this Church would not be Catholic. If the history of this Church extended back only to John Wesley or Martin Luther, or Henry VIII., or

John Calvin, this Church would not be Catholic. The Church that existed through all these ages, before these men and after, from the time of Christ to the present day, that Church is Catholic, and that Church is the Church of the Living God. Do you suppose that Christ established a Church that only began with John Wesley one hundred and fifty years ago? Do you suppose that Christ established a Church that began with Henry VIII., or Martin Luther, or Calvin, or Knox, fifteen hundred years after Christ's Ascension? Do you suppose that God has a Church here that has not lasted, has not continued, ever since the days of St. Paul? What God does, lasts. Truth never dies. It is error that comes and goes, springs into life and dies again. This Church, then, was not started by Henry VIII., as so many pretenders to education claim. It is Catholic, and has been in existence since the days of the Apostles. So is the Bible Catholic, and the ministry of this Church; and the Sacraments, and everything essential about this Church is Catholic; it has continued, all have continued alive and in practice from the beginning, and that, too, not by a few in a corner, but by a large part of the Christian world.

DUTY TO GOD AND MAN

Render therefore to all their dues (Romans xiii: 7).



ESUS had related several parables, and the Pharisees were very much displeased because He referred to them. They would lay hands on Him, but they dared not because the people had great respect for Him. So, because the Scribes and Pharisees feared the people, they took another course—they tried “to entangle Him in His talk.” They thought He would say something to offend, either the Jewish people or the Roman government. Ever since the return of the Jews from captivity, they had had no king. They had been governed by their high priests. Judea, in our Lord’s time, formed a part of the great Roman Empire, and was governed by a ruler appointed by the Roman Emperor. Was it likely that the Jews would be content with this state of things? They were no more content than any other people conquered and ruled by a foreign power. They were restless, discontented, unhappy, hoping sooner or later to break from Roman bondage. Their reason

for wishing so earnestly for the Messiah was that they trusted He would certainly conquer the hated Romans. And, besides their natural dislike to a conqueror, most of the Jews thought it not only humiliating, but sinful to acknowledge a foreign ruler. Because they thought, as we read in the Book of Genesis, God had given them their land as their own forever (Gen. xiii: 14-15), and therefore they considered it disobedient to Him to confess that they were no longer owners of the promised land.

Now see what this has to do with the question which the Pharisees and Herodians propounded at this time: "Is it lawful to give tribute unto Caesar or not?" To pay taxes to the Romans was to acknowledge their authority. The Pharisees, and most of the Jews, thought it wrong to do so, although they were obliged to submit. But the Herodians thought it was right. They were a party among the Jews who were anxious to make friends with the Roman authorities. Some of each of these parties came to Jesus, hoping that He would think they had been disputing among themselves and wanted His decision. They tried to flatter Him—they called Him Master; they said He was true, and cared for no man's opinion. Then they asked Him if it were lawful to give tribute unto Caesar. With such artfulness or

shrewdness they came to Jesus. They thought He must decide with one party or the other. If He said it was lawful, then the Pharisees could have stirred up the people against Him as one who took part with the Roman oppressors. But if He said it was unlawful, the Herodians, the partisans of Herod, could accuse Him before Pilate, the Roman officer, on the charge of "forbidding to give tribute to Caesar." Afterwards we find, in fact, that He was brought before Pilate charged with this very accusation (St. Luke xxiii: 2)—"We found this fellow forbidding to give tribute to Caesar."

Let us see the foundation of this charge. What was Christ's answer in this plot in which two opposing parties had united, the partisans of the people, and the partisans of Rome? "Bring Me a penny, that I may see it" (St. Mark xii: 15). And they brought Him a penny, the very coin in which the hated tax was paid. There it was—stamped as all Roman coins were, with the head of the reigning emperor, and bearing his name and titles. "Whose is this image and superscription?" The Jews could not but answer, "Caesar's." "Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's." As if to say, Let them without scruple render to Caesar all that belongs to him. Let

them pay his taxes, keep his laws, for loyal submission to their earthly ruler need in no way interfere with their duty to their God. While they rendered unto Caesar the things which were Caesar's, they could at the same time render to God the things which were God's: the faith, the love, the obedience, which were His due from every true Israelite.

Could either the Pharisees or the Herodians find fault with this answer? The Pharisees found that Jesus insisted as strongly as ever they did on the duty of giving to God what belonged to Him, while the Herodians could not complain that He forbade giving to Caesar his due. They were astonished at His wisdom, and at the failure of their plan; they left Him, and went their way. "The powers that be are ordained of God." St. Peter writes, "Honor all men. Love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honor the king." Jesus told the Jews to pay their taxes. Nothing can excuse us from obedience to lawful authority, except when that authority commands us to do what God has forbidden. And we must be very sure that God has forbidden it, and not be like the Jews who thought God had forbidden Roman rule in Palestine.

Fortunately, our duty to God and our duty to those in authority do not conflict. Many of

God's servants have been able to serve faithfully both their earthly and their heavenly Master. The life of Joseph and of Daniel is ample proof of this. Joseph in the Egyptian court, and Daniel in Babylon. In fact, did not these men serve each of their masters better by serving them both? So can we serve our God better, and our country, by doing our duty to them both.

But suppose the powers that be are not Christian, and do not believe in God; in fact, are opposed to Christianity; we are to render to all their dues. This is proved by Joseph's faithful service in Pharaoh's court; by Daniel's service under Babylonian kings; and, above all, by Christ commanding that tribute money be paid to heathen Rome. Our privilege is to follow Christ's liberty and Christ's law, serving both our country and our God. Thus we may at one and the same time "Render unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's, and unto God the things which are God's."

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Romans, teaches that civil rulers are servants of God for the public good—even heathen rulers, because the rulers of the very Romans that St. Paul wrote to were heathen. St. Paul and St. Peter both suffered death because they would not worship heathen gods at Nero's command. Yet St. Paul calls them *ministers of God for the public good*. He says

they attend continually on service to God and the public weal, and are therefore entitled to our service and support. He teaches that taxes are paid to rulers as ministers of God, and their proper end is the glory, honor, and service of God, and the welfare of His people.

Render to all their dues; owe no man anything, save one, namely, Love. Love is a debt ever to be paid, and yet ever due. For when Faith will be absorbed in sight, and Hope in fruition, yet Love will remain a debt to be paid in Eternity, and yet due for Eternity.

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